

U.S. STAKE IN A DEMOCRATIC RUSSIA

Y 4. F 76/1: D 39/21

U.S. Stake in a Democratic Russia,...

JOINT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEES ON

EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

AND

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

MARCH 24, 1993

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs



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U.S. STAKE IN THE DEMOCRATIC RUSSIA

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 1993

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST, AND
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, INTER-
NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS,

Washington, DC.

The subcommittees met, pursuant to call, at 2 p.m. in room 2200, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Tom Lantos (chairman of the Subcommittee on International Security, International Organizations and Human Rights) presiding.

Mr. LANTOS. The subcommittees will please come to order. Today the Subcommittee on International Security, International Organizations and Human Rights and the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East will consider the U.S. stake in a democratic Russia.

One does not need to underscore that this is a rather timely hearing. It had been scheduled many, many weeks ago, and we are delighted that these outstanding witnesses are here today to tell us and the American people their view of this paramount issue.

We will address the American interest in democratic political development and market-oriented economic reform in Russia, as well as what policies our Government should pursue to encourage democratization there. These critical questions involve decisions we in the Congress will be required to make involving U.S. financial assistance and many other kinds of aid. It is important that we have a clear understanding of what our interests are in a democratic and market-oriented Russia, as well as the kinds of policies we need to pursue in helping the development of democracy in that country.

Some of us feel that critical months, maybe a year-and-a-half, were wasted at a time when assistance, involvement, participation could have made the chances of democratic government's survival in Russia far greater. Our witnesses today are extraordinarily well qualified to assist us in making these determinations.

They are Ambassador Robert Strauss, former U.S. Ambassador to both the Soviet Union and then Russia; Dr. James Billington, our most distinguished Librarian of Congress and one of the great historians on Russia and the Soviet Union in this country and, indeed, in the world; Dr. Paula Dobriansky, Adjunct Fellow at the Hudson Institute and Board Member at the National Endowment for Democracy; Dr. Peter Reddaway, Professor of Political Science

and International Affairs at George Washington University and internationally recognized authority on Russia.

Ambassador Strauss is at this moment attending a lunch with the visiting Russian Foreign Minister. He will join us in a little while.

I would like to call on my good friend and distinguished colleague, the ranking Republican Member of the subcommittee, Congressman Doug Bereuter of Nebraska.

[The statement of Mr. Lantos follows:]

STATEMENT OF HON. TOM LANTOS

The Subcommittees will come to order. Today, the Subcommittee on International Security, International Organizations, and Human Rights and the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East will consider the United States Stake in a Democratic Russia.

Our hearing is particularly timely in view of the dramatic developments that have unfolded in Russia in the past few days. At our hearing today, we will address the American interest in democratic political development and market-oriented economic reform in Russia, as well as what policies our Government should pursue to encourage democratization there. These critical questions involve decisions we in the Congress will be required to make involving U.S. financial assistance and other kinds of aid. It is important that we have a clear understanding of what U.S. interests are in Russia, as well as what kinds of policies we should pursue in helping the development of democracy in that country.

Our witnesses today are particularly well qualified to assist us in making these determinations. They are:

Ambassador Robert Strauss, a partner in the law firm Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld and former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Russia.

Dr. James Billington, currently the Librarian of Congress and a prominent American historian of Russia and the Soviet Union.

Dr. Paula Dobriansky, adjunct fellow, the Hudson Institute and board member, National Endowment for Democracy.

Dr. Peter Reddaway, professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University.

Ambassador Strauss is presently attending a lunch with the visiting Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev. He will join us at our hearing a bit later, but he should be able to provide additional insight when he arrives.

I would now like to recognize our ranking Republican Member of the Subcommittee, Congressman Doug Bereuter of Nebraska.

I would like to ask that each of our witnesses today limit their oral statement to no more than 5 minutes because Members of the two subcommittees have many questions. Of course, the written statements of all witnesses will be placed in the record in their entirety. Dr. Billington, will you please proceed.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would summarize part of my statement, so I would ask unanimous consent that it be put in the record in its entirety.

Mr. LANTOS. Without objection, the statement will be entered into the record.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, we are witnessing a remarkable series of events in the Russian Republic. What does the current crisis in Moscow mean for the United States? If Russia falls into chaos or lurches backwards into totalitarian dictatorship, the price would be enormous. An aggressive Russia armed with thousands of nuclear weapons could be a severe blow to the worldwide democratization process.

A despotic Russia willing to use its veto as one of the Permanent Five would be able to halt important strides and end the stalemate in the Security Council in the United Nations. Moreover, it would

not allow us to cut our defense budget—as much, at least—for a peace dividend.

I would note, in the next 2 weeks President Clinton is going to be submitting a supplemental budget request. In that supplemental request, it said there would be a request for \$300 million to cover the cost of international peacekeeping activities in the many trouble spots where the U.N. has established a presence. This \$300 million is in addition to the \$487 million that has already been appropriated in fiscal year 1993 for peacekeeping activities. If Russia were to fall into anarchy and civil war, I would suggest that the cost of international peacekeeping could well mushroom.

Certainly we are right to be highly concerned about the current power struggle going on in Moscow.

Today's hearing is an opportunity to gain insights into the current situation from some of the most capable and knowledgeable observers. We also need to examine, through questioning our witnesses, regarding the size and nature of the U.S. stake in a democratic Russia.

Russia is in the midst of a social and political transformation of the most fundamental nature, and we need to look beyond the daily headlines. We need to be interested in the degree to which basic democratic institutions are taking hold in Russia.

We need to look at the long-term, positive trends; and we need, I believe, to look at areas of concern. We need to think about how the United States can best support democracy in Russia.

Our bilateral assistance program has a significant democracy promotion component, including the creation of democracy houses, establishment of Peace Corps and National Endowment of Democracy programs, and a wide range of USIA exchanges. One particular program I have had much interest in, and is apparently slated, would be the farmer-to-farmer program.

Yesterday, President Clinton announced his intention to present, quote, "an aggressive and quite specific plan to help support economic and democratic reform in the former Soviet Republics." I would certainly hope that this would be the case.

Also, of course, we can certainly understand Moscow's frustration over unfulfilled promise of Western aid. It seems we have considered, at least informally, the assistance issue here endlessly with precious little real help actually being provided. We need to become much more serious about actual decisions on any of our assistance efforts, and I hope President Clinton's statement will move the Congress in that direction.

I should note that some analysts have argued that some of our assistance efforts thus far have in fact been counterproductive. Some analysts suggest that we have inadvertently tainted those Russians who have accepted and been involved in U.S. assistance. Is that the truth? What are the facts? This is a serious accusation and it deserves our consideration.

I hope our witnesses can shed some light on these and other issues that they want to bring to our attention. I look forward to the statements and the responses from our distinguished panels.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you. If I might ask our distinguished witnesses to take their seats.

Usually we ask that you summarize your statements. I must admit I was so taken by the quality of one statement that was submitted yesterday, Dr. Billington, that I am reluctant to ask you to summarize it. You may proceed any way you choose. But I, for one, will be delighted if you read the statement in its entirety.

We have a 15-minute vote followed by a 5-minute vote. So we shall proceed for about 7 minutes, then we will take a brief break and resume as soon as we can.

Mr. LANTOS. Dr. Billington.

STATEMENT OF JAMES H. BILLINGTON, THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

Mr. BILLINGTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will summarize, and perhaps I can get it in in those 7 minutes.

Only very occasionally in history does a great nation take an entirely peaceful action that liberates and ennobles not only its own people but all peoples. The Russian people undertook such a step in 1991 when they overthrew their totalitarian system and embarked on a program of democratization and market reforms internally while permitting the secession from imperial control of all the non-Russian Republics of the former Soviet Union.

Now, just as some of the totalitarianism was an altogether unprecedented phenomenon in history, so the transformation process that is now going on in Russia is a totally new process that cannot be understood in terms of comparisons with Western democratic systems. It can't be understood just in terms of Kremlinology factions or individuals. It cannot be understood in terms of macro-economic plans, and it cannot be understood in terms of analogies with past Russian history.

This time, the time of troubles they are going through has a profound disintegrative effect, but they are not surrounded by external enemies as they have been before. In fact, all the principal former parts of the Soviet Union are rooting for the process of democratization and reform to succeed, but Russia internally is being driven ahead but driven apart by a kind of deep psychological and cultural force that has come to the fore at the break-points in human history when there is a collapse in the basic legitimacy on which all structures and authority depend.

The fundamental question in Russia today is, which of two basic identities will give the country the geographic, the psychological and the administrative coherence and unity it now lacks: authoritarian nationalism or open democracy?

There is nothing short of a colossal struggle going on between these two forms of legitimacy. The political drama in Moscow is only a small sideshow of the broader conflict. One form of legitimacy is based on Russia's long centralized authoritarian heritage that glorifies ethnic Russia in opposition to other groups and attempts to purify Russia by creating internal purges. The other form is democratic, based on accountability and building new market-oriented institutions from the bottom up. It has grown with remarkable speed on remarkably weak roots. Its "cleansing" is based on a thorough rejection of the Soviet past and on the rebirth of conscience and the transcending social violence.

The nationalists have an increasingly popular form of legitimacy without any prospect of effectiveness in rule. They would have Russia play a role inside the former USSR like that of the Serbian military in the former Yugoslavia. What is new is their de facto alliance with former Communist officials who still sit in the central parliament and local Soviets, which they dominate throughout Russia. These nomenklatura types offer the effectiveness of old line Communist Party bosses but they have no legitimacy whatsoever in the eyes of the population, and therefore they masquerade in traditional Leninist fashion behind parliamentary forms and legalistic arguments as they pretend to play a "centrist" role. Their model is the Chinese combination of openness to the international economy with renewed internal repression.

Yeltsin is the only legitimate political leader, not only by virtue of his unprecedented election in June 1991, but still in the eyes of most Russians. A poll taken yesterday revealed that 65 to 67 percent of Russians supported Yeltsin and only 15 to 19 percent opposed him.

So the democratic reformers have legitimacy which gives them inherent strategic advantage in the current struggle, since legitimacy provides the foundation for rebuilding a society and since the young are largely on their side.

But, by not pressing rapidly for a new constitution and free elections after their victory in August of 1991, the Democrats failed to create the legal framework for translating popular legitimacy into effective rule. They also lack a nationwide political party which the authoritarian nationalists have in the 60,000 or so members of the new resurgent and highly experienced Communist Party.

Mr. LANTOS. Dr. Billington, if I may suggest, as an old friend, don't rush, because you are saying enormously important things; and we would rather have you stop when we need to break for a vote and then resume. Those are very weighty sentences, and I want to be sure we all absorb them.

Mr. BILLINGTON. All right. I apologize.

We have not realized that the overall Western posture has up until very recently demoralized the Russian Democrats and helped legitimize the nationalists by sending three altogether unintended messages.

First is the impression in Russia that the West does not much care if Russia does become either another Serbia—since we are not doing much to check the Serbs—or another China—since we are pouring investment into China despite its continued repression—rather than into Russia's chaotic freedom.

The second unintended message is that we simply cannot be bothered, that we have problems of our own, and we do not have to worry about Russia anyhow because the cold war has ended.

Now, these views overlook a host of increasing dangers from spreading ethnic conflicts, dispersed strategic weapons, 17 unstable nuclear power stations, potential destabilization of the Middle East, the new Muslim republics, a whole host of disaster scenarios. The right-left coalition could turn the former USSR very rapidly into another giant nuclear Yugoslavia.

A third depressing message put forth recently, particularly by much commentary in this country and elsewhere in the West, is

the suggestion that the current political struggle is just between two groups equally committed to reform, and that we must not express a preference for fear of alienating one or another camp.

Now, a greater Western role cannot ultimately determine the Russian future. But the democratic West stands to be discredited for years to come if democracy fails in Russia, whatever we do or do not do. The so-called left-right or red-brown coalition, as it's called—that is to say, former Communists and the new resurgent nationalists who are nothing short of Fascists; I have some illustrations, if you like, of some of their latest publications, and there has been a flood in the last couple of months; no one reads this stuff, but I can assure you it is very alarming—this so-called left-right or red-brown coalition depends for its very identity on antiforeign sentiment, which it will promote regardless of what foreigners do. It relies on a mask of centrism promoted by Communist officials speaking excellent KGB English on American talk shows; and it relies on the hypothesis that there is always moral weakness and equivocation in the West.

There has been an all-out internal political war on the Yeltsin government since at least late last autumn, which has been taking Russia on a steady path toward authoritarian nationalist rule. The last two sessions of the Congress of People's Deputies, in December and March, were almost entirely devoted to nationalistic demagoguery and the evisceration of Yeltsin's authority.

This is nothing new for this vestige of Communist rule, a body in which only 4 percent were nominated by non-Communist entities and 86 percent are former Communist nomenklatura insiders, a far larger percentage than existed even before under the earlier Communist rule.

Mr. LANTOS. May I ask you to suspend for a few minutes while we cast our votes, Dr. Billington.

The subcommittee is in recess.

[Recess.]

Mr. LANTOS. The subcommittees will resume.

Dr. Billington, we regret the interruption. You may proceed.

Mr. BILLINGTON. Mr. Chairman, I was at the point where I was discussing the parliament whose leaders, I would remind you, tried systematically to depose Yeltsin even in March 1991, before he was elected President; and thereafter in the first hours of the first day of the coup, they initially tried even to block Yeltsin's decision to resist, as has not generally been noticed in the history.

Reactionaries in Russia today openly talk about the Pinochet variant, the Chinese model, various models for reinstating order in society. The brilliant writer, Iurii Kariakin, warned here in Washington that the danger in Russia would not be fascism but a full-blown Nazi type movement complete with ethnic cleansing. The Russian parliament and Moscow politics have become an open-air demagogic theater in which inexperienced political leaders, many of whom were reformists, have begun playing with nationalistic slogans, one of them bragging that he would turn Yeltsin into, quote, our Hindenburg.

Yeltsin's recent move provides clear indication that he has no intention of becoming a Hindenburg. Hindenburg, you will remember, was the lawful leader of Germany, and the Nazi accession to

power was entirely legal in process, defined by a large number of lawyers, while the democratic forces quarreled among themselves and the world more or less stood by.

Anyhow, I think Yeltsin's recent move provides the basis for securing a real compromise to preserve the reform process, even with the present imperfect institutions, such as the parliament. This is because none of the parliamentary politicians has Yeltsin's popularity, and I think they would be frightened by any popular referenda. They are clearly driving for a rapid impeachment in the special session of the Congress of People's Deputies they have summoned for tomorrow.

In a chaotic situation that cried out for a strong interim leader, Yeltsin has preempted that role in the name of continued reform—a role that might otherwise have been claimed by a dangerous nationalist demagogue. Yeltsin has, indeed, created the conditions at last for a compromise that is not simply a further installment payment on the surrender of the reform agenda. We must hope that he will keep this option open, while continuing the pressure he must bring on that vacillating, unrepresentative body by appealing over their heads to the electorate.

It would have been better had he indicated a clear timetable for elections for both a new chief executive and a new legislature, and there is even a risk that his own rule could eventually replicate many features of the nationalistic dictatorship he is trying to forestall. But Yeltsin has kept the peace and he has crossed the Rubicon of reform in a way that others have not.

The most important security guarantee against the continuing nuclear danger lies in sustaining the progress toward democracy that Yeltsin and his reformers have begun. In the absence of institutions like Solidarity, trade unions, or the Catholic Church in Poland, the role of a central leader in the absence of those institutional structures is particularly important. And the most important security guarantee for America in the world against the continuing nuclear danger lies in sustaining the progress toward democracy that Yeltsin and his reformers have begun.

In the long and depressing history of how wars actually start in the modern age, there is one encouraging fact. Democracies do not fight each other. Free peoples, able to freely choose what their governments will do, want to develop their own nations freely and celebrate their own beliefs and cultures fully.

Russia in its brief post-Communist reform period, for all its economic and political mistakes, has come up with a formula for the future that is entirely affirmative under the Yeltsin leadership, because Russians are seeking both to share in the democratic and market development of the post-war world that totalitarianism so long denied them and at the same time to recover the inspiring power of their own older religious traditions and cultural heritage which Marxist ideology so long suppressed and distorted.

This great people is, of course, experiencing extraordinary difficulties, particularly economic ones, in making its transition from an overcentralized war-oriented economy. But in contrast to all the earlier crisis periods through which the Russian people have gone, the time of troubles at the beginning of the 17th century, the two world wars and the Bolshevik revolution itself, Russia is no longer

threatened by external enemies or foreign intervention in its internal affairs. It is free at last to concentrate on its own internal investment.

The civilized world unanimously supports the democratic transformation of Russia, and the process has produced remarkably good feeling between Russia and its neighbors on the once-warring Eurasian heartland where so many spreading global conflicts have originated. The only threat to a new era of peace in this area comes, at the moment, from the violent negative nationalist extremists that represent a throwback to the ethnic and religious violence of a past era.

The world community no less than the peoples of the Commonwealth of Independent States have a great stake in making sure the kind of ethnic violence based on force against neighbors and the ethnic cleansing of minority groups we have so tragically witnessed in Yugoslavia do not occur in this larger, more heavily armed arena.

There has been ethnic conflict in some parts of the Soviet Union, but to the great credit of the Yeltsin government and the new democratic process in the Russian federation, there has as yet been no serious violence between Russians and non-Russians.

America and the other G-7 nations should undertake, in my view, a substantial crash program of assistance to Russia and the other states of the Commonwealth of Independent States, first of all, because there is a, to use Holmes' phrase, clear and present danger, a danger that in the midst of all their present difficulties, the democratic process in Russia may be destroyed or derailed by nationalist extremists. If the democratic experiment fails in Russia, the United States and the West generally could be forced to go back to even higher military budgets than we faced in the cold war. We could be faced with a new Fascist-military government fueled by racist feelings and hatred of foreigners—a kind of violent nationalism we have not had to deal with since Hitler.

Mr. Chairman, I have a number of their recent newspapers that they have started printing. This is clearly part of an intensified campaign. These new journals are filled with anti-Western, anti-Semitic cartoons and pronouncements. Here you have a very typical one, an anti-Semitic cartoon. This says, London-Paris-Washington gallows.

Mind you, these are all new publications. There has been a tremendous amount of this. It is increasing dramatically, and it is clearly part of taking advantage of freedom to mount this kind of an attack.

Here is another anti-Semitic cartoon showing Zion taking over the Soviet Union, showing the shrunken borders of Russia; I won't read you the provocative statements.

Here is another one they call Yeltsinism; this is cynicism, you see. A new feature of journalism just in recent months, red banners proclaiming the revival of the Communist Party, the return of the Soviet Union, like a phoenix from the ashes.

We get tremendous amounts of this stuff at the Library of Congress. Nobody reads it, but I feel under some strong obligation to point out that there is an extraordinary chorus behind this movement. It is not a benign interparliamentary set of discussions.

Mr. LANTOS. You obviously read it, don't you?

Mr. BILLINGTON. Well, I don't read it all. I don't have that strong a digestive system. But we read enough to know what is going on.

Anyhow, we should also become involved with Russia because it could become the greatest new market economically and the most successful new Federal democracy of the late 20th century, all appearances and present history to the contrary, because there is a new world of private entrepreneurship and civic development rising from the bottom up. It is solidly rooted in a new generation of leadership that could transform Russia more rapidly than we believed possible, if an interim stability can only be attained.

Helping Russia economically in this period, if the stabilization can be maintained in the interim, will produce jobs for Americans because the things Russia needs to develop are skills that Americans have—skill in producing food, housing, consumer goods, extracting energy resources, and developing local entrepreneurship and self-reliance on nongovernmental organizations.

It is important now, in my view—and I would make this suggestion—that we establish a Marshall Plan-type mechanism, perhaps under Basket Two of the Helsinki Final Act, which would not necessarily command Marshall Plan-level resources but which would immediately involve Russians and other CIS members, together with Americans and other G-7 members, in a coordinated effort at defining and organizing economic and political development, certainly in Russia and perhaps throughout the former Soviet Union.

We need some immediately targeted programs in areas that have rapid impact on the economy—the food chain and the energy chain, in particular.

We need greatly increased exchanges under the Freedom Support Act and rapid high-level support for privately funded programs like the Freedom Exchange, a crash program to bring over 10,000 Russian manager-entrepreneurs for short, intensive experiences—a program needing only a political push from Washington to be able to startup immediately.

The new generation of Russians needs to be rapidly exposed—I am just about finished, Mr. Chairman, here—to the full range of private and local—

Mr. LANTOS. Dr. Billington, we will continue, and we will alternate the chairing, so please go ahead with your testimony.

Mr. BILLINGTON. This new generation of Russians has the motivation, they have the education. They have not had the exposure to the full range of private and local institutions that make for a pluralistic democracy. In addition to rolling over debts and other economic measures of the kind suggested, for instance, in an excellent article in today's *New York Times* by Senator Bradley, I would suggest considering a treaty of long-range cooperation based on an endorsement of the reform program that would make more unequivocal than has yet been done our support for the Russian reform.

Far from competing with domestic needs, a small, increased, immediate investment in Russia would save us the massive additions we would have to make before long to our defense budget if Russia were to take the authoritarian turn that the Communist nationalist coalition is trying to engineer.

It is a good investment. These kinds of things are good investments no matter how the political crisis turns out because they will be building a better relationship with the forces of the future.

Much of the democratic movement comes from Siberia and the deep interior; and in some dark versions of Siberian folklore, the savage bear was originally just an ordinary man, but when he was denied the bread and salt of simple human hospitality by his neighbor he retreated in humiliation into the forest and returned unexpectedly in a transformed state to take his revenge.

Mr. ACKERMAN [presiding]. Thank you very much, Dr. Billington.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Billington appears in the appendix.]

Mr. ACKERMAN. Professor Reddaway.

STATEMENT OF PETER REDDAWAY, PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Mr. REDDAWAY. Thank you. It is difficult to interpret current developments in Russia objectively, because, in my opinion, inexorable forces have recently been moving most, though not all, things in directions opposite to what we would like to see. In the process, these forces are undermining many of the bold and innovative initiatives that creative Russians have taken in the last few years, and to which Dr. Billington has alluded.

To put it another way, a new time of troubles, or "smuta" in Russian, has begun for the hard-pressed Russian people, and it is increasingly doubtful whether in these circumstances, moral and material support from the West can do more than mitigate certain problems, and then mostly at the margins. We cannot "fix Russia" or "save democracy" there, desirable as these goals are. That is megalomaniac thinking.

Russia is the largest country in the world, and one of great complexity and far more diversity than the United States. The forces at work in it are much too deep and powerful for us to have a major impact. If, however, we reject grandiose thinking and look reality in the face, we can and should help in various constructive ways.

Over the last 6 to 9 months, the discourse of Russian politics across the political spectrum, in various political forums and in the media, has been permeated by fears about, quote, "the collapse of the country," "the paralysis of power," "the danger of civil war," "the abyss of hyperinflation and mass unemployment," and so on. I believe that fears of this sort are, unfortunately, well founded.

In my opinion, central government as such in Russia—the Presidency, the parliament, the Cabinet of Ministers, has now lost most of its authority over the country. It has become totally gridlocked and there is no near-term prospect of this disastrous situation changing. Consequently, power and authority have shifted to the leaders in the provinces. These leaders are increasingly going their own ways, passing laws without any reference to Federal laws, and trying to consolidate the political and economic power of the local oligarchies that they head.

As a report by one of the leading Moscow research centers said, power remains "in the hands of the structures which held power

before August 1991". Most of the local leaders are, "representatives of the former system, with no objective interest in carrying out reforms". They are engaged, "in a whole series of actions aimed more or less clearly at torpedoing them".

Two of the country's ethnic republics, I should add, have, within the last year and a half, with impunity, declared their independence from Russia.

Meanwhile, the Russian people are having to contend with inflation of more than 2,000 percent a year, and with rampant, unchecked corruption at all levels of government. As a leading Russian expert on the Mafia groups which control much of economic life recently said, "In the past, the Mafia worked hard to insert its people into key places in government, but now that is quite unnecessary. Virtually all officials can now be bought, and the Mafia buys them every day."

Thus, what happens nowadays in Moscow politics is not, in my opinion, likely to have much impact on the country as a whole. Burdened by the crippling legacy of Communism and the profound divisions among the Russian people, President Yeltsin's government has failed to control the economy or effectively to govern the country. In foreign policy it has moved from a strongly anti-imperial position to an incipiently imperial one, as manifested in its recent policies, toward, for example, Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine.

In short, then, if Yeltsin departs or becomes a mere figurehead, it is unlikely there will be a series of sharp changes in governmental policies. The rhetoric will probably be less to our liking, but the substance may not change very much; and in any case, most domestic policies will be weakly, if at all, implemented on the ground.

Let me conclude with a few more specific points:

First, whatever government may be ruling in Moscow, the U.S. Government should not scale back its cuts in defense spending. Rather the reverse. The back of the Russian military has been broken for at least a decade. Its personnel level has fallen dramatically, through mass desertions, mass resignations, and mass draft evasion, to 1.7 million, and may well, according to a senior Russian official, fall to 1.2 million by the end of this year.

Second, Western aid should be given not only to Russia, but also, and demonstratively so, to most of the other successor states of the USSR, and especially to Ukraine. To do otherwise is to encourage imperial tendencies in Russia, with all the dangers attached to that, of a new authoritarianism in Russia and wars against its neighbors. The West should think innovatively about how it can best help in the many peacekeeping operations demanded by present and future wars around the Russian periphery, and even within Russia itself.

Third, the United States should quietly, in my opinion, encourage key figures in Russia today to consider forming a coalition government or a round-table process, and to aim to hold elections in the near term. The outcome of such elections is almost sure to be disturbing to us, by the candidates whom it produces and the deputies, but the elections might help to stabilize the polarized political situation in Russia to some degree.

Fourth, in the granting of aid, the United States should channel most aid to the localities, avoiding the corrupt central and local governments as much as is humanly possible. They should deal as far as possible with unofficial organizations that have a track record of noncorruption and reasonable efficiency.

To conclude with a few remarks about the future and reinforce some of the things that Dr. Billington has said, the future that I foresee as most likely is one in which for 2 or 3 years, perhaps, Russia increasingly fragments and becomes increasingly anarchic, the present legal anarchy turning into political anarchy, and there is also the danger, much invoked in Russian politics, of a possible civil war.

However, after this period of time has elapsed, since politics abhors a vacuum, a process of reintegration is likely to occur; and then the key point is on what basis that reintegration will occur. Let us hope that it can be done in a rational way. However, one should certainly not discount, and I think we should be very vigilant about the possibility that it would be an extreme form of Russian nationalism which would be the ideological basis on which Russia might be reintegrated; in which case, as Dr. Billington says, ethnic cleansing in the Serbian style is an entirely possible and even likely development.

We may hope, however, that after a period of time, such an extreme government would moderate and move toward, again, democratization and the market in the way we have seen in recent years. At that point, the aid which we have been giving and should give in the future will hopefully bear fruit; and also a more successful and larger-scale effort of aid to Russia will, hopefully, in those circumstances be more possible.

Mr. LANTOS [presiding]. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Reddaway appears in the appendix.]

Dr. Dobriansky.

**STATEMENT OF PAULA DOBRIANSKY, ADJUNCT FELLOW,
HUDSON INSTITUTE AND BOARD MEMBER, NATIONAL EN-
DOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY**

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, distinguished Members, this hearing is being held at a time of crisis in Russia, when the forces of democratic reform, represented by President Yeltsin, are pitted against a diverse coalition of unreconstructed Communists, Russian ultranationalists, and those who are simply afraid of the rapid pace of change in the post-1991 Russia.

The outcome of the struggle is uncertain. However, while the fate of democratic reforms hangs in the balance in Moscow, it is a propitious time to look at the nature of the long-term issues involved. That is, the events of the last several days have brought into sharper focus a fundamental reality. What is happening in and around the Kremlin affects not just U.S. interests but those of the entire world.

Clearly, the United States has a major stake in the fate of Russian democracy. Thus, the real question for U.S. foreign policy is not whether we have a stake in Russian democracy, but rather how

we can best help the forces of democracy there. I believe several propositions need to be established first.

We should recognize that democracy-building in Russia—or anywhere else in the world, for that matter—while it deserves the utmost U.S. support, is not an enterprise certain to succeed. To be sure, democratic trends have been evident during much of the last decade. Likewise, Francis Fukuyama's thesis, stripped of its more extravagant trappings, is essentially correct. There are no more viable ideological challenges left to the Western democratic tradition.

Still, democracy in many parts of the world remains fragile, and reversions to authoritarian rule are conceivable and even likely. To the extent that the success of democracy is not an assured endeavor, the promotion of democracy, tempered of course, with realism and an appropriate sense of humility, should be viewed as one of the major organizing principles of U.S. foreign policy.

Another general proposition which should be understood by U.S. decisionmakers is that democracy-building in Russia has both economic and security dimensions. In that regard, Russia's Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, aptly noted in *Foreign Affairs*, "The fate of democracy in Russia will be determined to a greater extent on the economic front. Russia's democratic government is based on mass popular support. However, many of those who voted for the present leaders regarded them as individuals capable of rapidly ensuring, 'social justice,' and of transforming into everyday life old myths about the possibility of egalitarian, universal well-being"

Additionally, I believe that a Russia mired in imperialistic and aggressive foreign policy ventures is unlikely to retain fidelity to democratic reforms. This course of action is certain to alienate Russia from the world community and help bolster militaristic and ultranationalistic forces within the country.

An important proposition for U.S. decisionmakers is also that democracy-building in Russia should not be viewed as an isolated endeavor. I agree with my colleague, Professor Reddaway, that it should be developed as part of a broader effort to promote democracy among all countries previously within the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, among others. Such an approach can be cost effective and mutually reinforcing. Conversely, the failure of democracy in one country, however large or small, has repercussions for the others.

An essential prerequisite for a sound strategy is a sense of realism about the current conditions in Russia and what, in fact, can be accomplished there. Democratic change will not occur overnight. We should acknowledge that vestiges of Communism continue to dot Russia's landscape. Indeed, in thousands of Russian towns and villages, for all practical purposes, the former Communist Party apparatchiks still dominate are political, economic and social aspects of life. Dislodging the entrenched elites throughout Russia and empowering people so as to conduct genuine democratic elections at all levels is the single most essential component of democracy-building in Russia.

The adverse and broad legacy of communism is also evident throughout Russian society. Regionalism, a lack of civic tradition, absence of respect for law and order, corruption, and cynicism

greatly complicate Russia's democratic transition. Significantly, even people with a genuine commitment to democracy frequently exhibit a lack of initiative and a near total absence of administrative skills. Helping Russia overcome the Communist legacy and build a civil society and effective government is another crucial component of democracy-building.

Finally, another significant proposition is that our assistance should be mainly directed at building democratic institutions and values, but, at least for the time being, we should also concern ourselves with helping those Russian leaders who in our judgment can best promote democracy. Given the recent events in Russia we should support President Yeltsin, so long as he remains committed to democratic reforms in general and holding promptly a meaningful national referendum.

Specifically, then, what types of democracy programs can and should be devised and how can our programs be made more effective?

First, we should offer our blueprints and concrete assistance to help Russia lay the institutional foundation of modern democracy and formulate a well-coordinated, short-, mid- and long-term strategy for U.S. assistance. Six key areas should be addressed: First, the structure of government and governance; second, the rule of law; third, education, the promotion of a democratic civic culture, and strong citizen associations; fourth, free independent media; fifth, free market reform; and six, the facilitation of competent law enforcement and appropriate civil-military relations.

Our democratic assistance programs should be targeted, timely in nature, and developed on two tracks, governmental and non-governmental. Such institutions as the U.S. Information Agency have a role to play in fostering democracy in Russia. However, it is better to rely more on nongovernmental organizations and international organizations and funnel most assistance through them. In the past, experience has shown that they have often worked most effectively with grassroots democratic forces, and, in the long run, will have an impact on the development of a democratic civic culture. Additionally, they are best equipped to render direct assistance. The work of the National Endowment for Democracy is most noteworthy in this regard.

Given the limited absorption capability in Russia, it is the quality and not quantity of both democratic and economic aid that counts. U.S. decisionmakers should first assess Russia's absorptive capacity, then determine U.S. Government goals, and evaluate how much assistance should be given. Simply giving the Russian Government money handouts is not the answer; most of such economic aid would be wasted as subsidies to inefficient state enterprises. However, already committed Western economic aid should be used to help individual private enterprises through such measures as the establishment of a "safety net," as suggested by George Soros, and the creation of a fund for private entrepreneurs and management training.

Democratic and economic assistance should not just go to Moscow. Local cities and villages should also be recipients, but not solely at governmental levels. Rather, assistance should be directed

primarily to local nongovernmental institutions and entities in Russia.

And finally, U.S. decisionmakers also need to decide the scope of their assistance to the Russian Federation; that is, should assistance be funneled through Moscow, Russia, or go directly to the individual republics within the Russian Federation?

Our commitment to democracy-building in Russia should be more than inspiring rhetoric and the channeling of economic assistance. Indeed, it should permeate all aspects of our foreign policy, carried out by all agencies, as well as private organizations and individuals. Our assistance efforts should focus on the six broad areas of democracy-building which I have outlined. However, we cannot and should not seek to prescribe precise democracy recipes. Democracy cannot be just transplanted from one soil to another. We must take into account cultural, geographic and historical differences.

In sum, I think that building a democratic, prosperous, stable and peaceful Russia is something that can be only accomplished jointly and is an endeavor in which the United States and, indeed the world, has an enormous stake. The real issue for American statecraft is how best to help Russia accomplish this feat. Ultimately, it is the Russian people and the leaders they choose that will determine the success or failure of Russia's current democratic reforms. However, it is equally clear that the United States and other members of the international community of nations, aided by international organizations and NGO's, can greatly help Russia's democratic forces.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Dr. Dobriansky.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Dobriansky appears in the appendix.]

Ambassador Strauss, this will not be an easy act to follow. We have had three of the best testimonies I have had the pleasure of listening to.

We have three outstanding Soviet and Russian scholars. And you come to this witness table with a lifetime of outstanding public service, most recently as our very distinguished Ambassador, first to the Soviet Union, and then to Russia. We are delighted to have you.

You may proceed any way you choose.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT S. STRAUSS, PARTNER, AKIN, GUMP, STRAUSS, HAUER AND FELD, AND FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO THE SOVIET UNION (AND RUSSIA)

Mr. STRAUSS. Let me begin, Mr. Chairman, by saying I have no prepared statement.

Let me, secondly, say that those kind words you uttered to me do not impress me at all. I begged you not to make me appear with these three distinguished people, and to let me appear by myself where I wouldn't have to be compared with them; and you wouldn't let me off the hook. So your nice words will get you nowhere with me.

More seriously, let me say that I just will make a few comments and then take such questions as you might have, rather than make a statement.

Mr. LANTOS. Very good.

Mr. STRAUSS. I have to stop myself every now and then, Mr. Chairman, Members of the committee, to keep things in perspective. I have been around long enough to know that it is very easy for things to get out of perspective when you are dealing with changing and turbulent times.

When I hear my friends, both professional and nonprofessional ones, critical of what hasn't taken place in a positive way in Russia and the other republics, and when I hear them also critical of how little they have accomplished, I keep reminding them to keep in perspective that this greatest revolution in the history of the world is 15 months old—15 months old. Maybe, depending on how you measure it, a bit longer. But not much longer.

It was less than 2 years ago, August the 19th, as I recall, the second or third day of the coup, less than 2 years ago, that I landed as Ambassador to the former Soviet Union, not to Russia, and my trip into town was delayed an hour while armored tanks rolled across the highway. And I arrived at the embassy, and they were concerned about my safety and security. And I slept in the basement of the DCM. And we looked out of the window and saw tanks and crowds. And Mr. Billington was there with me, was there when I arrived, and was a great source of advice and judgment for me then.

But it is hard to believe when you think in terms of what we expect, think just how far we have come in that brief period of time.

One of the reasons I am late is because I had lunch today Mr. Kozyrev, who, as you know, was in the city with some of his people.

Mr. LANTOS. The Foreign Minister of Russia.

Mr. STRAUSS. He is here to visit with the President and the Secretary of State, and I think with some of the Members of Congress, helping prepare for the upcoming summit.

And while we feel sometimes at a loss to be able to interpret events and make judgments, these people who are so deeply involved in it are almost relying on television, as we are, to—as to this fast-moving, changing story. And it is very difficult to make judgments today.

I have several judgments of my own. I don't know that they are necessarily solid, but they are trying very hard, as of right now, to, I think, arrive at some sort of compromise between the parties in Russia today. They were discouraged when they broke up in their last meeting, but since that meeting or around the time of that meeting, President Yeltsin has—I guess the last thing that has happened is, he has come out with his decree that was expected to be forthcoming; and as it was interpreted to me—and I haven't read what he came out with—it was somewhat softer than had been anticipated. And you are probably familiar with that, possibly more familiar than I am; it may have been discussed here already today. It is very current, if it has been discussed here.

It is somewhat softer, and it respects the right very much of the constitutional court and suggestions that all of these things that he has talked about are subject to the constitutional court.

And so it is—being a softer document to some extent, it is my personal interpretation that it is again a reaching out and seeking compromise by Yeltsin. Whether there will be a compromise or not, who knows? I am sure the President and Mr. Khasbulatov, the

Speaker of the parliament, don't know; so there is no reason for me to know. But there is that search going on.

I would hope they find it. But only, only if it retains or regains some of the power that a President of a country such as Russia today needs to govern wisely. I don't mean raw, unrestrained power in any way, but one subject to constitutional controls and democratic society that still permits him the power to make the kind of decisions and issue the kind of decrees or what have you, and make the kind of appointments that are necessary.

A compromise that doesn't do that, it seems to me, means more gridlock and more dangers. So I hope that that will be possible.

I am not one of those who think that this country has been—has come too close to President Yeltsin at all, or supported him too strongly or too personally. I think the administration as articulated, first by the President and then by the Secretary of State—has gone just about to the limit of where they should go. If they—if the President and the Secretary went much farther it would be too far in my judgment. They haven't. If they had not gone almost as far as they went, it would not have been far enough. So I think they are just about where they ought to be now.

I don't have too much patience with people who worry too much about personalizing that sort of situation. I don't see how you can keep from personalizing the situation, where you are dealing first with personalities and people; and second, where there is so little institutional—so little of institutional structures to work with. By the very nature of the situation, you are dealing in personalities. That doesn't mean you deal with them to the exclusion of all others. And I think we have made that clear in this country.

Finally, I think your hearings are exceedingly timely right now. I don't know, having come late, what went on before, but I think it is very important, critically important that President Clinton goes to the summit with some very concrete things he can do for the Russian people in his hand and also a strategy for utilizing the West generally, and the G-7, or let's say the industrialized world generally and the G-7 in particular as they try to deliver some of these programs.

We need to do much—I don't think there is anything as important, that we can do over there, as assisting them in rescheduling their external debt. That just simply has to be done; there is nothing second to that in terms of immediacy. That has to be done. The rescheduling of that debt requires some kind of resolution between Ukraine and Russia of their own problems vis-a-vis each other.

I am not certain they can resolve those problems without outside assistance. It may be, one of the G-7 should offer to be the honest broker in that deal and sit the parties down in a room, or with them in a room, and try to resolve it. They haven't been able to do it themselves. You either have to do that or try to make a deal excluding—with the Paris Club, excluding the Ukraine; and I don't think that can be done.

They are like two business partners trying to divide up the assets and liabilities, and they are having a dickens of a time trying to do it. Again, in my judgment, it will not be done without some outside assistance.

I don't think there is any question that we have to direct ourselves—by we, again, I speak of the West, not just our country; maybe the industrialized countries, not just the West. We have to assist them. There must be some sort of social safety net over there. It just has to be done. And now you are talking about money.

A lot of the things I am talking about don't really have much to do with money, but that does. I don't have any list of them, but I am thinking about what we can do.

FOOD

Food. I really think we should very seriously consider how we can almost inundate, inundate Russia and some of the other republics with consumer goods—food and other goods in the food area—taking them from stockpiles; and barter is the way you get at that, probably. It can be done. It is not that complicated. There are skilled people who know how to do barter intelligently and wisely and effectively and in a hurry.

But when you fill shelves with food and practical consumer goods that are desperately needed, medicines and other things, among the things you do is you soak up rubles. And when you soak up rubles, you help deal with hyperinflation which is a tremendous threat.

There are any number of other things I could deal with, from housing up an down. But let me just conclude by saying those are some offhand thoughts. I am pleased to be here. I will be pleased as you move around and continue this to take such questions as you might have.

RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES AND THE INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLE

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador, for your very valuable comments. We have an enormous range of questions, because you have opened up whole new areas. You have made some very stimulating suggestions, and the issue is of the utmost importance for our national security.

Let me begin perhaps with an unusual question, and I would like as many of you as would care to comment. The American people will do the right thing if they understand the situation. And one prerequisite for understanding the situation is to have some agreement about terminology. It seems to me that much of the discussion and dialogue about what is going on in Russia uses terms that mean something entirely different there than what they mean here. Let me just give a couple of examples.

We are talking about, commentators are talking about, pundits are talking about, a contest between the parliament and the President. This, it seems to me, clearly cannot be translated into our own frequent contest between the Congress and the American President.

There is a great deal of discussion concerning the high court. That high court, it seems to me, has no relationship whatsoever to our Supreme Court in terms of its having established itself as an impartial entity with a long history.

We hear the word "impeachment," which to me is perhaps the most amusing aspect of the dialogue, because as I understand it,

there is no Soviet word, or Russian word for impeachment. They are using our word, "impeachment." And we are dealing with a constitution that is a Soviet Communist-era constitution with several hundred often contradictory and internally inconsistent amendments.

So I would first like to ask the question, how do we clarify this terminological confusion? Would you like to begin, Dr. Billington?

Mr. BILLINGTON. I think you have raised a very good point. The further confusion is the use of the idea, very appealing to Americans, of the separation of powers that we all have. But of course this constitutional court was chosen by the essentially unelected old-style Communist parliament itself.

And you mentioned impeachment. One of the laws that was passed relatively recently says that impeachment, to be confirmed, must be supported by referendum, ultimately; whereas what they are doing is rushing to judgment with this impeachment. The so-called independent head of the Supreme Court was here last week in Washington, spreading, as far as I could tell from the hour I spent with him, what was essentially disinformation, urging us to push Yeltsin into a compromise. Whereas Yeltsin has been compromising—he is having his legs cutoff by slow salami slices. He is supposed to compromise, although he is practically bled dry.

It is not right for a justice of the Supreme Court to be playing that kind of political role.

I confronted him with it directly and he did not look me straight in the eye, which tells you a lot.

Mr. LANTOS. Am I right in assuming—I hate to interrupt you, but I think it is on point—am I right in assuming that when this constitution was initially adopted, it was in fact fiction, because all power resided in the Communist Party?

Mr. BILLINGTON. Exactly.

Mr. LANTOS. So the structures we talk about, the parliament and the President and then the constitutional court, these were sort of embellishments and adornments, largely for outside consumption, when the real power of running the country was in the Communist Party, which has since been declared illegal?

Mr. BILLINGTON. That is right.

Mr. STRAUSS. They are like props. They are props in a television show. That is what those constitutions were.

Mr. LANTOS. Better put.

Mr. BILLINGTON. The short answer to your question is, you do need a totally new terminology. It should be called the Communist-era parliament or something like that to make it clear.

It is interesting to note the parliament that resulted from the 1990 elections was 86 percent Communist; the preceding one was 66 percent. As the system was dying, these Communists packed the parliament as a means of holding on to a measure of power they saw was ebbing away. So, in fact, the current parliament is much more Communist than the preceding Supreme Soviet was, or the Congress of People's Deputies; even though it was, of course, also essentially a front, a prop organization.

So I think, yes, it would greatly help if there was a lexicon established that made clear these problems.

I think part of the problem also is that people here are saying that the Yeltsin government has failed. Well, part of the reason it has failed is because of a kind of systematic sabotage. Take the hyperinflation. The central bank has been reporting to the parliament, not to the executives and they have been printing money, something like 3 trillion rubles over the last year and few months. That completely undercuts the possibility of any kind of stabilization of the currency.

No executive authority can function if the parliamentary body is letting the printing presses run away and create these late Weimar, hyperinflation conditions.

I will give you another example. The exhibit we had of documents from the Soviet archives during the Bush-Yeltsin summit. The parliament has issued orders to the archives not to show that exhibit in Russia. So you have a situation where the parliament is simply intruding. So we see a consistent effort to aggrandize power by a vestigial institution, sanctified in the Brezhnev era, set up as a refuge for the dying nomenklatura. But people here go on talking as if this debate in Moscow was a Western juridical discussion.

Mr. LANTOS. Dr. Dobriansky, would you like to add something to this?

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. I agree completely with Dr. Billington's description. The only comment I would make is that it is very clear that the conflict at hand is basically one about power, rather than about a separation of powers. I am convinced that the Congress of People's Deputies, dominated by former Communists and ultranationalists, does not just want to limit Yeltsin's powers. They want to throttle them. That is the current situation, as you have stated.

Thus, I think it is wrong that some of the reports we have heard in our own country seem to describe this confrontation as if it were a battle between a U.S. President and Congress. One must be reminded that Russia is not yet a democracy. It is struggling to become one, and struggling to create those institutions which would provide limited government and a separation of powers.

Mr. LANTOS. Professor Reddaway.

Mr. REDDAWAY. I agree with just about everything of what Dr. Billington said just now. We should, however—just for the sake of accuracy, we should keep in mind that the parliament was elected in 1990 after the Communist Party's monopoly on power had been officially ended. Just about all the members who were elected did stand in contested elections. They were elected by the people.

Now, admittedly, the nominating bodies were mostly Communist bodies. But we should also remember that this body elected Boris Yeltsin as its speaker. So it is not a completely wild and woolly body. There are within it quite a lot of moderate people, some good friends of mine, good Democrats.

The majority, however, with the passage of time, has swung against Yeltsin, and the leader, Khasbulatov, has abused his position as speaker in order to turn it into a personal power base which he manipulates in extremely unscrupulous ways.

But we should, I think, not just regard all members of that parliament as somehow beyond the pale. There are a number of very decent members of it, and they have all been elected.

Mr. LANTOS. Would you estimate the percentage of those you would consider to be democratically oriented and prepared to follow the rules that are established in democratic societies?

Mr. REDDAWAY. One measure would be the number who vote against impeachment of Boris Yeltsin, if that vote comes to pass. And according to the preliminary estimates, polling behind the scenes how members intend to vote, it has been thought that it is doubtful whether two-thirds will vote for Yeltsin's impeachment. So by that measure, somewhat more than one-third could be described in one sense as if not pro-Yeltsin at least against impeaching him.

Mr. LANTOS. Ambassador Strauss.

Mr. STRAUSS. I don't have anything to contribute. I think it has been covered very well, Mr. Chairman.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A RUSSIAN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PACKAGE

Mr. LANTOS. You pointed out in your opening paragraphs, Dr. Billington, that this tremendous revolution liberated not only the Russian peoples but also lots of other peoples who had been under Soviet imperial rule. It is one of the major events of modern history, clearly. The assumption that this very complex society could become a market-oriented democracy without very significant assistance from abroad was a very naive assumption on the part of the West.

And while we have lost a lot of time, we are now looking forward to a Yeltsin-Clinton summit, where one of the topics clearly will be a package of assistance that the President of the United States will be able to present to Yeltsin, hopefully on behalf of a number of countries, not just the G-7, but perhaps others.

I want to deal with orders of magnitude. This morning, several of us met with the Secretary of State, and I suggested to Mr. Christopher, as I did on an earlier occasion, that it would be very appropriate, for instance, for President Clinton to pick up the phone, call the Emir of Kuwait, and tell him that had we not acted to save your little country at enormous cost and at enormous risk, you would now be the 19th province of Iraq. Kuwait would be the 19th province of Iraq, and the emir would probably be living in a villa on the French Riviera. A similar comment could be made to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, that Saudi Arabia would be the 20th province of Iraq.

I find it very plausible, that with a serious request from the President, a significant amount could be collected from both of these entities, and others which have enormous resources. Coupled with Japanese aid, Western European aid, and whatever modest aid we are prepared to offer, it would be a package of some size.

I am wondering if our four distinguished witnesses would be prepared to comment on what kind of economic package is called for. We realize, much more is called for than an economic package. To compare, last year alone West Germany pumped over \$100 billion into East Germany, which has 17 million people. By the end of this decade, West Germany will have pumped over \$1 trillion into East Germany; 17 million people.

But their goals are very different. West Germany must equalize living conditions between East and West Germany to make a viable unified country, and nobody expects to equalize Russian living con-

ditions with anything. But as Ambassador Strauss pointed out, flooding that country with minimal consumer goods and food and pharmaceuticals—and I was there just a few weeks ago and saw the desperate need—does require something more than conversation and token assistance.

How do you sketch out, Professor Billington, the economic package that is called for, one that has to be an international package, with the United States playing a minor but key organizing role?

Mr. BILLINGTON. First of all, Mr. Chairman, on the conversation with our friends in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, I would include in that conversation the point that if this thing turns sour and they have an authoritarian regime in Russia, its ethnic cleansing will be heavily directed toward the presently moderate Muslim states of central Asia, and they in turn will be inclined to move in an authoritarian direction for self-protection, and follow the Iranian model, which would be a total disaster for the Middle East. There are serious geopolitical consequences here. So we don't need to appeal to their benign feelings. They need to just realize what the implications are and how much is at stake.

The second thing is I would say we really do need a mechanism in which the Russians themselves contribute. There have been two problems with aid so far. First of all, a lot of it hasn't reached the people that it should, as Dr. Reddaway was saying, and much more of it, in my view, should be channeled directly into the local institutions where you can actually see what happens and where it is going to directly have an impact on the human situation.

But the other thing that has been wrong has been that the Russians themselves haven't been involved in it. They have been kind of viewed as a sort of Third World country waiting in the wings for other people to decide what to do about them. That is why I propose the use of the Helsinki Final Act, Basket Two. Basket Three was decisive in changing the whole nature of the final stages of the cold war. Basket Two could be decisive in providing a Marshall Plan-type mechanism for what will surely not be U.S. financial aid on the Marshall Plan scale, but it will have to be considerable.

I think such a mechanism can involve not only the Russians but the American private sector, the Western private sector, and the governmental sector in a coordinated way, so that this idea of fast impact projects over there on key sectors like energy, which can immediately increase their foreign exchange earnings, and the food chain which can immediately change the dyspepsia, then you can concentrate aid on the things you have mentioned, building some housing for returned veterans so you don't get a lumpen base for a Fascist nationalist movement, delivery of pharmaceuticals, and a few key things of that kind.

But you couldn't start out something persuasive at this stage without a \$3 billion or \$4 billion minimum, and I should think probably considerably more.

Again, the last thing I would mention is that the most important factors for development are an educated and motivated populace. That is something new in Russia. There is a lot of motivation and natural resources; they have both. So the massive investment isn't necessary. What is needed is for the Russians to get some crash course of experience with the kind of institutions which the young

people believe in but have never seen work. That is why I think exchanges, and particularly crash exchanges that develop a management class will help.

One of the fundamental political problems the reformers have now—and I am not just talking about Yeltsin but the 30-, 40-year-old young people, the people under them are all Communist officials—is that there is nobody who knows how to do things in a different way. We should accelerate the learning process, above all by bringing people over here (more important than sending our people over there. These people can take it back and apply it in a hurry. Above all, it is a question of persuading the Russian reformers that we are serious, that we have a commitment. I think many of the key reformers know it, but the populace as a whole has not gotten the impression that there has been any kind of psychological commitment on our part. Then, the bear in them begins to start growling, and that is what we are hearing now.

Mr. LANTOS. Ambassador Strauss, you have been our top American in Moscow during this very critical period. How do you see the aid problem?

Mr. STRAUSS. First, I don't know what has been said before I came here, but I know as a historical fact and as a matter of fact the administration is working very hard on specific things to discuss with President Yeltsin at the time of the summit. Having said that, it seems to me our biggest problem is, Mr. Chairman, we are caught in a sort of a catch-22 here. There is a desperate need for the Russians to get themselves in shape to receive the kind of assistance we might wish to provide them, whether it be technical assistance, financial, or any other kind.

They literally are not able to receive it. They don't have the structure, they don't have the bureaucracy, they don't even have functioning lines of power to deal with. And they can't get that until they get assistance and get a structure again running and get their problems of the day behind them, at least temporarily.

So it is a true catch-22. It makes it very, very difficult to work. It is hard to implement an IMF program when they can't begin to get the basic parts of it off the ground. We are going to have to make up our mind that we can't treat it as an ordinary case. It is going to take real creative thinking.

The assistance program is going to take the kind of creative ideas you just mentioned, of going to some of these other countries. That is creative thinking. That is reaching out for something different, imaginative, and trying it. If you try three of those things, one of them is going to work. Probably the one you thought was least apt to work, but it will be the one that will turn out to be very constructive. We are going to have to do that.

In terms of this whole program, we not only have to make in some way the Russians understand what they need to do for us to be able to do the things we need to do for our mutual best interests. We have failed miserably, I think, and it is the reason I have been traveling kind of hard and speaking a lot lately, is we have failed miserably in letting the American people know what the stakes are over there for them. They view what is going on here at the table today as typical foreign aid.

Nineteen out of 20 Americans you talk to view this as foreign aid. It isn't typical foreign aid. We have a very, very selfish domestic interest in this. It affects our budget, it affects our taxes, it affects our security, it affects the ability of farmers. We are losing market.

Let's take the great agriculture-look at the food program. We are losing with some legislation that is on the books that has to deal with the fact that when a country, Russia being one of a number, they are not the only ones singled out. When they fall behind in their interest payments, we can no longer do any business with them.

Here we have got a country, I don't know how long the United States has been selling wheat and other products to the former Soviet Union and now Russia and the former republics. We have a group of customers we have been doing business with for decades and all of a sudden they are behind because they are in trouble and all of a sudden we say, we can't do business with you anymore. That doesn't make any sense to me. Banks shouldn't treat customers that way, and retail stores say, you have been our customer for a long time, we will stay with you a bit longer. We need some creative thinking there. We need some creative legislation to get out of this mess.

The Canadians are doing something about it. They are changing their restrictions over there. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney spoke up about it. I think it is going to take some legislation up there, too. But they are going to recapture some of that market. They are not going to turn it over to every other country in the world. They are going to keep those markets open for Canadian products. We have a lot of farmers in this country who want those markets kept open, if we can do it in a rational way.

You talk about inundating with food. I will tell you and your colleagues, Mr. Chairman, there is more money, I will bet you the 60 or 70 percent of the expense of shipping items such as butter over there, I think the storage on butter and things like that that we have kept in storage here, every couple of years, doubles the cost again. So you are reducing subsidies, you are reducing the expense to taxpayers, as well as providing some necessary food, and you can do it, as I said, not just as a giveaway but you can do it on a sale basis; you can do it on a barter basis. There are a great many things I think we can do.

The Chairman of the New York Fed next month will have 250 Russians over here that come from the financial community. There is no financial community, but at least they can make a noise like somebody in the financial community does. They are not financial people, but they understand a few of the terms.

But he has picked 250 of the best and brightest over there. They are going to spend 2 months over here on a college campus, I think in Connecticut, Fairfield, Connecticut, and then they will go out across the country for 2 or 3 months and work in banks, and they will learn banking.

Mr. Chairman, it takes 2 months for a check to clear if you cash it in Russia today. If you are lucky it clears in 2 months. If you are unlucky, the money just disappears. So just think what that

can mean, if Jerry Corrigan's program really works as he thinks it will. These are the things we can do.

It doesn't take a ton of money. A few million dollars will run this whole damn program for a year. And there are many others like it.

There is so much that can be done. But I would conclude by saying how you get those things executed in the middle of a raw, really a raw political fight or a fight for raw political power, and that is what is taking place over there in the roughest and crudest sort of terms. That is what it is, and, hopefully, that will resolve itself where we can—because they have to resolve that. We can't resolve that. Once they resolve that, then, I think we can begin to move into some of these programs.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you. Professor Reddaway.

Mr. STRAUSS. Let me make one more comment. When you look at these programs, Mr. Chairman, you have to separate them in long-term and short-term strategies. There are some very desperate things that fall in the short-term strategies that ought to get done. We certainly can't fail on long-term things.

Energy is an absolute must if they are going to get out of this. Energy will be the engine that pulls them. But you have to have a short-term engine program that will begin producing in 6, 7, 8 months, some currency, and then you have to be absolutely sure we get some laws in place over there and some support here to enable some of these major programs to go forward that will be the engine that drives them for the next generation.

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. I would like to make several points, if I may. First, I do think that multilateral assistance is key. It is not just the United States that has a stake in the future of democracy in Russia. As I mentioned in my testimony, clearly the world has an enormous stake in this for obvious political, economic, and security reasons.

Second, I don't think that the emphasis should be focused on the quantity of assistance. You can't really determine what precise quantity is needed up front. You have to consider the quality of your assistance and determine to what extent it is going to really have the desired effect that you would like it to have.

Third, I think it is also important to reemphasize that, as part of an aid package, one should not only be looking at Russia, but should also be giving assistance to those countries previously part of the former Soviet Union.

Fourth, assistance is essentially, I think, categorized into several parts. You have democratic or technical assistance; you have economic assistance; and finally, you have humanitarian aid.

Thus far, economic aid has been given at a macrolevel and I think, as Dr. Billington mentioned, the Russian people have not really felt its impact, if that aid has had any. In other words, it is at a macrolevel, and they don't really either know or appreciate it. This isn't a joint cooperative effort.

Furthermore, I think that a lot of the economic aid that has been given has been unfortunately wasted. For example, as I mentioned before, such assistance has subsidized wasteful, inefficient industrial complexes in Russia.

Instead, more assistance should be given in the form of technical and democracy-building aid. Regardless of how Russia's political situation evolves in the future, this type of assistance will reap long-term benefits. It facilitates people-to-people exchanges and consequently, fosters goodwill. I think it would have a significant moral impact and a very favorable impact on the development of a democratic civic culture in Russia. This kind of assistance will also broaden the Russian population's knowledge of what democracy is all about, and will enable them to experience it.

If you look at some of the types of programs that have been undertaken, they have included exchanges of lawyers, journalists, parliamentarians, businessmen, and private entrepreneurs. These programs in the long run, can have an important positive impact on the future development of democracy in Russia.

Last, I think there has to be recognition that we are in this process for the long haul, meaning that democratic change is not going to happen overnight. Too often, we look for immediate gauges of successes or failures. In this case, there will be ups and downs, but I think if we are steadfast, particularly in the area of democratic assistance, it could have an impact.

Mr. LANTOS. Professor Reddaway.

THE ROLE OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. REDDAWAY. It is extremely difficult to deal in an effective way with a package of aid to a government that is in such disarray as the Russian Government is. Its authority over the country has collapsed. Power and authority have shifted to the regions, and the ethnic republics. I wrote at length about this in the *New York Review of Books*, and I did bring along a copy of it, which you might want to put in the record, in which I spell out the ways in which that authority has passed.

Mr. LANTOS. Without objection, that article, which is an excellent article, will be placed in the record.

Mr. REDDAWAY. Thank you.

[The article appears in the appendix.]

I think it is essential to deal with nongovernmental organizations, because they are, in general, although by no means always, less corrupt than the official ones.

This whole situation is more or less the same in the Ukraine, and I would very much endorse what Dr. Dobriansky said about the great importance of aiding, together with Russia, the other major republics of the Soviet Union, Ukraine above all.

In the field of debt relief, I agree with Ambassador Strauss here. There are problems with the rules of multilateral organizations and their losing credibility if they just write-off gigantic debt of \$70 billion or \$80 billion. But if those rules could be gotten around, I think it would be helpful, because Russia is most unlikely to repay on any significant scale these debts for something like 5 to 10 or even 15 years.

On the stabilization fund idea, I think this is not practicable in the foreseeable future, because there is no possibility of the Russian economy being stabilized. If that does emerge, then let's consider, by all means, a stabilization fund.

The social assistance idea is certainly an interesting one and worth exploring. There are colossal difficulties in applying it and making sure the little packets of \$6 reach peasants in Russian villages and small Russian towns without being intercepted on the way by the omnipresent Mafia, which would very quickly be catching on to this program and trying to take advantage of it.

There is plenty of food at the moment in Russia. Some people are not able to buy as much as they want because they are simply short of cash. But I would not, in the present circumstance, think it was a good idea to inundate Russia with food. This would only, I think, distort the market conditions even more. We should put pressure on the local and central governments to improve the operation of the markets before we do something like that.

There are going to be lots of emergency situations, however, in which emergency food aid, I think, will be desirable. It may be that that is the case already in Tajikistan where you have a situation of anarchy and large scale refugees and a lot of very severe human suffering, not to mention about 100,000 people who have been killed recently.

On medical supplies, yes, that is a drastic need. As much medical supplies as possible. Again, channeling them so they are not intercepted by criminal elements is a serious, very, very difficult problem. I personally know of cases where medicines were delivered to hospitals and the administrators of the hospitals sold the medicines on the black market and did not give them to their patients. Technical aid, I think it has been covered by my colleagues.

Mr. LANTOS. Before I turn to my colleague from Indiana, Dr. Billington has an observation.

Mr. BILLINGTON. Just a brief point. To liven things up for you, we will have a disagreement here with my friend, Professor Reddaway.

It is true, this central government isn't functioning very well but it is not true that all authority has vanished. It isn't functioning very well because the parliament has been trying to sabotage and has been successful and largely unopposed in the systematic sabotage of the reform program for a very considerable period of time.

I think the government does not function very well, but particularly the President, has very considerable authority. I think the published version of the draft decree, which we now have, by the way, steps back from this business of a special rule of some kind, and specifies in much more detail procedures toward a referendum on a new constitution to be followed by procedures for elections.

I have seen those drafts for constitutions. They are a very solid base for administrative law, the kinds of contracts that will be honored. There is a lot going on from the bottom up. And there is a program now for accelerating the process of moving toward a better functioning democratic system of government.

So I think if we see that an aid package is part of a process of collaborative support, and if we can put firm timetables and make sure there are guarantees that this continues regardless of the personalities, it seems to me things are not quite as bleak as Professor Reddaway suggests, although they are certainly not healthy at the moment. In other words, there is the human talent and there is a process that the president of the federation has endorsed which can

move things, accelerate the process toward the formation of a more effective—not just government—but system.

Mr. STRAUSS. Let me add one more thing about that with respect to Dr. Reddaway's statements, which I fully agree with. This food business is not quite as simple and can't be dismissed quite that simply. Food is not no short supply, but food is priced out of the range, and no one can afford to buy it, but a handful of people.

If I walk in the marketplace, I can buy the most beautiful food in the world, but no one will shop with me but a handful of others. Food is not attainable by the average person, working person, in Moscow or outside of Moscow.

And the prices are just out of reach. And I would say in terms of wheat, for example, the last two Russian officials I have spoken with in the last few weeks each have stressed the desperate need for wheat, for example, not corn but wheat. And so there is—that is a serious problem there.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much.

Mr. STRAUSS. It deals with inflation. It has a lot to do with bringing prices down if you have enough on the market.

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. I would like to add one footnote. I think that this example reinforces the need to pursue a two-track approach. Assistance should not just be funneled through the Moscow-based government, no matter how strongly you may feel about the need for the central government to retain its authority. There is a need to channel assistance to existing nongovernmental organizations and through international bodies.

As I mentioned before, regardless of changing political circumstances, nongovernmental entities, in most cases, have been successful at targeting critical sectors and in nurturing grassroots democratic forces. I think that they should continue to play a very pivotal role in future democratic assistance.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much.

Congressman Bereuter.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for the wisdom and the views that you have presented to us here today.

I am from the State of Nebraska, not Indiana, but that is the great American heartland, Mr. Chairman, and we do, as a matter of fact, produce much of that grain that is being shipped to Russia. Ambassador Strauss, I particularly appreciate you bringing up the current problem, the fact that we have the statutory prohibition against the use of our commercial sales as long as the debt is not being repaid in a timely fashion. Of course, this is the first time that is occurred with regard to Russia or its predecessor, the former Soviet Union. I would assure the Ambassador that almost every year we are the largest supplier of feed grain and wheat to the former Soviet Union and to specifically the Russian component of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation.

POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS OF U.S. SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE IN
RUSSIA

I wanted to move to another area, however, important as that is from a parochial sense. I have to say we lost a great share of our

grain market for many, many years after the Afghan embargo. I don't want to go through that process again.

It has been said frequently, and it has been mentioned here today, that President Clinton perhaps has gone as far as he could at this stage. I have openly stated that I think his steps have been entirely appropriate. It is suggested that he could go too far, and that American involvement could be seen as too overt. If that were to happen it could have a negative impact eventually.

I would like to ask you if you have any views about where we might reach that tipping point as far as the political leadership is concerned and as far as the man and woman on the street in Russia. When would an American involvement be seen as too overt, possibly bringing up, in light of the newspapers that are circulating that you showed us, Dr. Billington, those kind of rhetoric and concerns. Therefore, do we cloak it? Do we cloak our assistance in raiment that is international in effort? How do we avoid reaching that tipping point where we hurt President Yeltsin?

Mr. STRAUSS. I will give you a specific example. I think that if we were to move the site of the summit to Moscow to be of assistance, I don't think they will, but if they did, as has been discussed, while it sounds good, I think that would be going too far. I think it would be a backlash that we were interfering with their internal affairs, and I would sort of share that view. I think we would see it—there is a good chance we would see anti-American demonstrations by Communist groups on the streets that would give the world a view of American interference, involvement to the extent that it is interference that is a concrete example of something that is on the horizon that we have been reading about in the press. I don't think it will take place, and I don't think it should. That is the kind of thing I think would be going too far.

I think that men like the Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev are viewed as pro-Western. They are viewed as Westerners now. And it is a subject-terrible political problem. It is almost like, since I am from Texas and you are from Nebraska, Mr. Congressman, it is almost like if our constituents started viewing us as too West Coast or too East Coast. It wouldn't do very good at home. No good for him at home, and his friendship with our country is viewed as that. I think we have to be careful in those areas.

There are many areas, but I don't think that supporting someone who shares your values and who stands for the things you stand for, who is your friend and ally and is under attack, and whose survival suits your selfish interests, I think you can go too far, but being too timid is a far greater sin.

Mr. BEREUTER. With respect to the Vancouver summit, I had thought it was good it was offered, but perhaps we should hope it was not accepted.

Mr. STRAUSS. I think that is correct.

Mr. BEREUTER. A very high level Clinton official said relocating the Summit to Moscow also had a disadvantage. It was suggested that the Moscow replacement site would force President Clinton to meet with some of the parliamentary leaders which are the adversaries to President Yeltsin at this point. I wondered if we have the concern about the President traveling to Russia at this point, and that is something that he certainly must consider.

I would ask anybody else if they would like to say where that line is, if interest is a line that we need to be concerned about, and how can we convey this concern under international conduct.

Mr. BILLINGTON. I think the main concern is in the other direction, that it is not perceived enough by ordinary Russians that we are engaged at all, that there is constant rhetoric and very little tangible that is dramatic, very little that has captured the imagination of this vast, still uncommitted population that is in a great state of confusion, but looks with extraordinary hope, perhaps exaggerated hope, particularly to the United States, for some kind of message.

They think they have created what they call a *podvig*. They have done a great heroic deed. They overthrew communism. They changed this system. And they see what has happened elsewhere as what they call little deeds, *malye dela*. Everybody else is doing little things, they have done something big.

That is why something dramatic is needed, like a Marshall Plan mechanism, the kind of package I think the President is now working on with his advisers. But there has to be something that crashes through, before we worry about interfering too much. We are involved just enough rhetorically to lend credence to the nationalist reactionary line that we are interfering, but we are not involved enough to be actually doing very much good, or even encouraging the people psychologically. And that is the most dangerous kind of all. Better to do absolutely nothing than to talk a lot about things you are going to do and have very little that gets through the pipeline.

And one other point I would like to make is that I agree with Ambassador Strauss that moving the Summit to Moscow wouldn't be ideal, but I wouldn't rule it out entirely. It depends on what the circumstances are and what the nature of the call from the Yeltsin people is, because it is so important that we tell them that we care, that we not stand by as they did in late Weimar Germany and say, the world doesn't care, we are occupied with other things, the World Series is going on this week.

I wouldn't rule out going to Moscow, if necessary. But the point is we have got to break through, because we have got to get across that we are involved, and that the world really cares about what is happening in Russia, that it is not just a little parlor game on talk shows, with people here saying well, we will just see which faction emerges and we will work with them. Of course we will, and of course we should communicate with all parties.

But the point is that for ordinary Russians, Yeltsin is the first man in history who has not only been popularly elected, he is the first man who has popularized the ideal of the grass root Russians, the ordinary Russians. This guy has crashed through, he has a relationship with them. If we seem to be not involved or indifferent, the stakes are very high for us. And I think even if he loses, and even if the reform program is derailed, you will earn more respect from the Russian people by taking a strong position on behalf of somebody who has strong respect even among those who hate him than you do by projecting this endlessly vacillating image of uncertain, timid, bet-hedging, bourgeois corrupt types, which the Communists have been telling them for 75 years we all are, and they

believe half out of superstition and half out of Communist propaganda.

There is a danger, but I think it has been inflated. The real danger is that in this extremely volatile situation we will be perceived as not having cared about the fundamental situation and as not having really stood by the people that everybody knows represent the best hope for progress.

Mr. BEREUTER. Dr. Billington, just a little commentary. We dilled and dallied with this issue in this Congress for well over a year. It took Ambassador Strauss to come over here to move something. I thought they underestimated the difficulty of putting together a coalition of support for Russian aid and underestimated the support of the American people for their leadership. I think we have been very cautious and unnecessarily delaying our assistance. As long as we put together a good program and explain it to the American people, they have been waiting for the explanation.

THE RUSSIAN MILITARY AND RECOMMENDED U.S. DEFENSE CUTS

I would like to ask a question related to the military's role. The Red Army, or the Russian Soviet military, has been rather professional, it seems to me, over the years. That is their history and they have not attempted to involve themselves in the political aspects of that society.

Dr. Reddaway, you suggested that the U.S. Government should not scale back its cuts in the defense spending. You argue the reverse, which is a rather impressive statement to make right now. I would like to know what you think the danger is from the Russian military being involved in a political scenario. Dr. Reddaway, if you want to give us a little more backing for that statement, I would appreciate hearing it. I think it would be good for the record.

Who would like to comment on my first question regarding whether we expect the military to sit there and be supportive of President Yeltsin at this point or at least not be overtly involved in his demise?

Mr. STRAUSS. I will give a personal opinion. I think President Yeltsin went out of his way to assure the world that the Army would stay out of this political fight that was going on. I think that General Grachev, who is very—I guess is his Colin Powell, General Powell, if you will, or maybe his Secretary of Defense, somewhere in that area, is a young man, he is not a man of tremendous experience on the world stage, but he is a very solid fellow, and he seems to learn fast. And he is very determined, he has been very determined to keep the military out of this kind of struggle.

We mentioned, Dr. Dobriansky mentioned different exchange programs. A couple of better exchange programs that we had, will surprise a lot of people. I was involved in them enough to be impressed myself. We had a tremendous exchange—I shouldn't say tremendous—exceedingly worthwhile exchange program going within our military, our military leadership and the Russian military leadership.

And they had their best people over here spending good quality time seeing how a military functioned and what discipline a private sector civilian supervision gave them. And I think they learned a great deal from that experience. And we learned also. They spent

real time with them and made great effort. It was a very worthwhile program, still going on.

Interestingly, the KGB and the CIA have exchanged people, as you probably know. It has been a very fruitful proposition. I have a marvelous T-shirt at home the KGB gave me one day, which had a picture of the KGB and CIA saying, together at last, in Russian and English. I thought to myself, if I wore this back in my hometown in Stamford, Texas, they would think I had gone crazy.

But anyway, those exchange programs do work. I think in the military you will find more discipline than you would expect. I would hope so, anyway.

Mr. BEREUTER. The Russians have come up to visit with the House Intelligence Committee, a committee that I happen to serve on, about how parliamentarians should conduct oversight on intelligence and related activities.

Mr. STRAUSS. Very encouraging.

Mr. BEREUTER. Dr. Reddaway, would you like to comment on why it is we should not stop the cuts but, in fact, the reverse?

Mr. REDDAWAY. I think the major reason is that in my opinion, and this is based on talks with a number of Russian experts on their own military and also with Americans who have recently visited Russian bases in various parts of Russia and the ex-U.S.S.R., is the decline in the Russian military is far greater than we have so far realized in the West. They are in a state of, I think, collapse is really just about the word, the sort of word they use about themselves.

There was a major study published a week or two ago by a Russian in which he quantified some of this. I produced the figures about the actual manpower levels in the Russian military, down to 1.7 million now, will probably be down to 1.2 million at the end of this year. That is way below what they planned, because they have had mass draft evasion, mass resignations from the military by the most capable younger officers, as well as deaths from cruelty in the military and a number of other factors.

Corruption in the military has become rampant, absolutely rampant, so much so that even though there have been virtually no trials of anybody in Russia for corruption on any scale, there have been a number of statements by law enforcement bodies about the scale of corruption in the military. This has not led on to any actual arrests and prosecutions, but we have got some statistics and we also know from many sources that this corruption is at a very high level. They are simply selling—you can simply go to a Russian base and buy almost anything you want on the quiet and export it, with their help.

Then, of course, they have left behind or been forced to leave behind in other republics a very large part of their equipment, their bases, supplies, ammunition, which have simply been inherited by the Ukraine and Belorussia, which have tended to have the best quality material and bases. They have lost all that. It is a military that is no longer coherent as a military machine because they have lost certain parts of their machine irreparably and they can't possibly recreate them.

Military procurement last year was down between 60 and 70 percent. It is going to be down by 50 percent this year. So they are not replacing lost equipment on any significant scale.

The morale factor there is crucial. I simply don't see this military being any sort of a threat to anybody except a very small neighboring country for, I would think, at least a decade. That is the major reason. And why give the hardliners the excuse to campaign for rearmament more vigorously at some point in the future by increasing our expenditure on defense in response to a threat that doesn't actually exist? That is the reason for my argument.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you.

Mr. REDDAWAY. On the question, will they be involved in Russian politics, there are signs that they are increasingly interested, although I don't myself expect it to be on a large scale because they are in such disarray, they are concerned about apartments, they are concerned about their pensions and so on. The numbers of military who will actually get directly involved in the increasing breakdown of the Russian political system I think will be relatively small, but they could, of course, play a significant part, and it is something that needs to be studied very closely.

AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN RUSSIAN POLITICS

If I could just add a comment, I agree with Dr. Billington about the desirability of more open American involvement, and even President Clinton possibly going into Moscow. We should, however, do it with open eyes. There will, if he does go, there will be undoubtedly demonstrations against him.

The parliament, the Supreme Soviet voted 125 to 16 a few days ago denouncing Western interference in Russian internal affairs. This was directed mainly at the United States but also at other Western countries that had spoken up on Yeltsin's behalf. And there are many Communist and hard-line groups that are in sympathy with that majority in the Congress, and undoubtedly would organize various sorts of demonstration.

I agree with Dr. Billington that that should not, in my opinion, be a determining factor. I think we should be bolder rather than less bold.

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. I want to comment on the previous point. I personally feel that our own ability to have an impact in the current situation is somewhat limited. I think the position that the United States has taken, meaning specifically verbal support and a show of support not only for President Yeltsin but also for all Russian democratic leaders, although they all may not be of the same stature, is an appropriate position to take.

As to the movement of the site of the summit, there is one point that needs to be taken into account. As you mentioned, you hope that it is not accepted. Personally, I think that is right, because I believe it could potentially make President Yeltsin appear weak. Indeed, it might not be in his best interests, actually, to have the summit take place in Moscow.

I'd like to make a final point with regard to the various criticisms of Western assistance. I think the criticism that Western aid as perceived by Russians has a negative influence or, is tainted, actually presupposes that we know better than the Russian people

and Russia's leaders what they in fact need. After all, they have asked for our assistance. We are responding to their requests. And I think that consideration needs to be taken into account.

Many of the criticisms I believe are derived from a very small segment of the Russian population, and if you look at some polls that have been taken, they usually feature those who are 55 and over. There is a generational gap reflected in some of these criticisms and negative perceptions.

DECENTRALIZATION AND RELATED ETHNIC ISSUES

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you. I have just one more question area, and then I want to yield to Mr. Gilman, who I know has been waiting. Perhaps you would give me just a brief comment.

I know, Dr. Dobriansky, you in particular are an expert in this area. The Russian Federation has 20 some component republics and 18 ethnic enclaves, and there is a decentralization effort going on. Some of the Russian nationalists in opposition to Yeltsin are quite concerned about that direction. They feel that the President has not enunciated the right policies.

What would you say about that kind of polarization, decentralization, and ethnic cleavages. What do we have to be concerned about in terms of stability within Russia?

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. There are several comments that need to be made. The first one is something Dr. Billington said earlier and I agree with. When you look at Russian leaders of the past, I think in all fairness, it can be said that Yeltsin is the first Russian leader, who has manifested a great deal of sensitivity for those aspirations of the non-Russian peoples both within and outside of the Russian Federation. You may recall, for example, his early support for the Baltic countries' independence. This suggests, at least, a predisposition on his part to pursue an enlightened ethnic policy.

As far as the developments in the Russian Federation itself are concerned, there is a clear trend toward decentralization, partially stemming from a perceived lack of strong authority and control in Moscow. Yeltsin's sensitivity to ethnic issues has also helped to induce the Moscow-based government to provide for greater autonomy for the various republics within the Russian Federation. Decentralization is also occurring just by necessity. Such factors as widespread corruption, the continuing presence of Communist Party apparatchiks holding positions of power in many ethnic areas throughout the Russian Federation, the inferior quality of the distribution, communications and road network, all combine to induce local leaders to go their separate ways in economic and political matters. Stated differently, the worse is the quality of governance that the government in Moscow is able to furnish throughout the Russian Federation, the more eager are the autonomous republics to take their fate in their own hands. Ironically, even such positive changes that are taking place in Russia today as the shift to free market economic reforms may also provide an additional stimulus to decentralization. In fact, many resource-rich autonomous republics in the Russian Federation feel that their economies would benefit if they were to take full control of their natural resources and sell them directly in the world market.

Consequently, there have been various positive developments throughout the Russian Federation in terms of economic reforms. Coming back to your question, though, about the political harmony of the Russian Federation, one must look at the Federation Treaty. The Treaty features a number of positive clauses which enable the autonomous republics to assume a greater deal of control over their political and economic affairs, while still remaining in the federation. This flexibility on Yeltsin's part may actually arrest further decentralization or even secessions.

I'd like to make a final comment on the future of the Russian Federation and U.S. policies. It is a very complex issue, and as I mentioned in my own testimony, one that I don't think the U.S. Government has tackled directly, yet. That is, what is the U.S. policy toward the individual republics within the Russian Federation. I maintain that this issue does need to be addressed, especially in terms of our assistance programs.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. REDDAWAY. I could just answer that this problem is addressed in my article in the New York Review of Books. I do think it is a very, very serious one. One of the reasons why the fragmentation and collapse of Russia is part and parcel of the daily political discourse in Russia is, above all, perhaps, because of the ethnic separatism and the regionalization which is parallel to that.

It is an acute problem. The Russians are worried at the moment, with very good reason, that the entire north Caucasus region will separate itself from Russia. Chechnya, which has almost a million inhabitants, has already declared independence. The other republics in that area are showing a lot of restiveness. Tataistan has declared independence. There are other ethnic republics just next to Tataistan that are likewise becoming restive and have formed a federation among themselves. It is a very serious possibility.

Mr. LANTOS. Congressman Gilman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to welcome our experts here, a great panel. I want to thank you for conducting this hearing. It comes at a most important juncture. This morning we were privileged to hear Secretary of State Warren Christopher on his views of what is taking place in Moscow. So some of us will be going over there in a few weeks.

SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES VERSUS LONG-TERM STRATEGY

Mr. GILMAN. The stakes for a democratic Russia are certainly high. Although many are discontented with events taking place thousands of miles away, I think we certainly have a major stake in what is happening.

Some of us are very much concerned about what we should be doing at this time while the eruptions are taking place internally. Should we still move ahead full speed? What are your thoughts about all that? Should we wait and see who comes out of all of this or do we continue to move ahead at a rapid pace?

Mr. STRAUSS. Mr. Congressman, I think in every area that is practical, to wait is a luxury we can't afford. To proceed is almost essential. There are some areas we can't proceed as well because of this disruption, but we proceed wherever we can. The industri-

alized nations of the world will, hopefully, with some effective coordination.

Mr. GILMAN. That leads me to the next question. What should be the short-term initiatives we could take to show our symbolic support, and what would be the most effective? I understand there are some \$300 million in the pipeline already that haven't been utilized.

Mr. STRAUSS. One of the things we ought to do is what I think President Clinton hopes to do, and that is find out what resources we have available here that haven't been utilized, and utilize them. And I, Mr. Congressman, I don't think we can afford the luxury anymore of things that just look good. I think we have talked them to death. I think it is time to act a bit more. I don't mean act imprudently, but we need to act.

I used to dread the talkers that came over. It was embarrassing to take the time of people trying to run a government under the difficulties they were having, and we had them lined up three deep to go in and talk to people about what we planned to do and what we were going to do or what we should do. We did precious little.

Ms. DOBRIANSKY. May I just add something to that? One of the short-term steps, which I may be beating a dead horse here, but which I think we can certainly can be engaged in, and we have been engaged in and continue to be engaged in, is in the area of, as I said, democratic assistance. You mentioned there were criticisms about people coming and going.

I know when I was at the U.S. Information Agency, one of the fundamental changes in terms of programs which were low cost, we send one or two individuals who are experts, say, in the field of law and the field of business, over—or in the field of government over to Russia or to other parts of the former Soviet Union, specifically to stay in country for a number of weeks or even a number of months and to render professional assistance to conduct workshops.

This is the type of assistance that I think can be undertaken immediately, and in fact it is already in progress.

Mr. BILLINGTON. Full speed ahead. You need a new dramatic mechanism that involves the whole G-7. I have made my suggestion that it be under Basket Two of the Helsinki Final Act. It can be done in other ways. But it also should involve the Russians and other members of the CIS so there is some dignified basis to help devise the macro plan as there was in the Marshall Plan.

There needs to be dramatic, concrete things to be ready to present at Vancouver. There is a great deal going on in the private sector. It hasn't been dramatized. It hasn't always gotten the little push of support it needs from the political sector. An individual from Ambassador Strauss's native State, a young person has put together—he spent \$100,000 together investigating it—to bring over young Russians and put them in American firms. He has got it all ready to go. He got a six-page letter from the State Department saying you have to fill out more forms before you get support. All he needs is a little push and a slap on the back and you have a good example of a major program that is all ready to go.

This is a much more creative country than we sometimes give ourselves credit for.

There are things going on, there are sister cities, I have been down in San Angelo, Texas. They have a sister city in Russia and they are setting up businesses by themselves. We need to bring before Vancouver a whole bunch of these people in Washington, put your arms around them and say, the American people want to do a lot more, this can be part of the package. But this is really a time for engagement. They are convening a special session of that Congress of People's Deputies tomorrow to try and get—

Mr. REDDAWAY. Friday.

Mr. BILLINGTON. I am sorry. I know there are people leaving. The Ambassador was leaving this afternoon to get back there. American television plays an extremely important role. When you have one commentator after another, one on CNN said, well, Ruskoi is more popular than Yeltsin. There are a number of polls to the contrary.

Another distinguished American said, well, it is an intramural quarrel between two groups of reformers; we shouldn't do anything. This plays a role in Russia. And we don't have enough people going on saying what I know many Members of the Congress feel, and I think the President has very well articulated, that we are concerned, we are supporting this process, and we are going to really do some things now, so help is on the way.

Mr. GILMAN. Are there any other short-term thoughts that any of you may have of how best and how most effective we can be in trying to—I know we are on a second bell now. If you could just in a minute or so.

Mr. STRAUSS. That doesn't lend itself to a very quick answer, Mr. Congressman, but there are a lot of short-term things we could do. I said earlier we need to have a short-term and long-term strategy. Short-term things that we could do—

Mr. LANTOS. If I may ask the panel to indulge, Congressman McCloskey who has the final question, because we have several votes coming up.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE IMPACT OF THE CRISIS IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA ON OPPONENTS OF RUSSIAN REFORM

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for missing at least half of this very, very important hearing due to the various votes and another very important foreign policy meeting.

Dr. Billington, particularly from you, I was so impressed, and I am going to be studying your statement tonight, a key sentence here, first is the impression that the West does not much care if we are becoming another Serbia, and you go on with commentary as to the Chinese.

I guess one of my fears in all this, and I am concerned that we stop the ongoing mass slaughter in Bosnia and do much better in trying to correct the problems of that region. What do you think the Russian dilemma means as to any policy developments right now? We see national columnists saying Bosnia, Croatia, Yugoslavia, if you will, is small beans, leave it alone. It appears to me you have very strong feelings and counter advice to the anonymous columnists I just quoted.

Mr. BILLINGTON. Well, I think that the Yugoslavia situation is very complex, and precisely what one should do there would be another long essay.

What I think is important to realize is that the reactionaries, the kind of red-brown alliance in Russia which I view as the threat to the reform process in Russia, uses the Serbian example as a success story, as a cautionary success story of how to go about it.

What they are saying is that when you have a chaos and breakdown—Yugoslavia was after all a multiethnic federation as the Soviet Union was, too—what you really need is a tough military—to be sure, a reduced military—and you can rally people back with this sort of tough line the Serbian military has taken. The world will protest but doesn't really do very much to stop it, and the real test of virility, of pulling yourself back together and getting yourself whole in this situation of disintegration Mr. Reddaway has described, is to have a campaign.

In the Russian case, there are 25 million Russians in the non-Russian Republics. So it makes the Serbian population of Bosnia and Croatia look very tiny indeed.

To the great credit of the Yeltsin government, there has been no ethnic violence between Russians and non-Russians. The opposition clearly sides with the Serbs. Some volunteers fighting with the Serbs are from these fractionary, semi-Fascist movements in Russia.

What the world does or does not do sends a message as to what the world will or will not do in the much bigger scale in Russia. I think that has sent a negative message, as has to some extent, our policy toward China.

And incidentally, what happens in Russia is going to affect the success in China, because they are currently saying there is no need to change, you can get all the economic benefits you wanted with continued repression, so why change? And if the next generation in China doesn't change, we are going to see another ripple effect of this Russian situation.

Mr. LANTOS. May I thank all of the witnesses for a remarkable afternoon of first-rate testimony. We are deeply indebted to all of you. This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:45 p.m., the subcommittees were adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Statement of James H. Billington
The Librarian of Congress
before the
Subcommittee on International Security,
International Organizations and Human Rights
and the
Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East
on
"The U. S. Stake in a Democratic Russia"

Committee on Foreign Affairs
U. S. House of Representatives

March 24, 1993

Only very occasionally in history does a great nation take an entirely peaceful action that liberates and ennobles not only its own people but all peoples. The Russian people undertook such a step in 1991 when they overthrew their totalitarian system and embarked on a program of democratization and market reforms internally while permitting the secession from Russian control of all the non-Russian republics of the former Soviet Union.

Just as Soviet totalitarianism was an altogether unprecedented phenomenon in history (not just another form of authoritarian rule), so the transformation process that Russia is now going through is a totally new process in history. It should not be discussed in terms of comparisons with Western democratic analogies and will never be understood by the forms of analysis we repeatedly use in the West: political Kremlinology focused on personalities; macro-economic analysis focused on programs; or historical analogies focused on past revolutions.

The fact is that Russia is being both driven ahead and riven apart by the kind of deep psychological and cultural forces that come to the fore at genuine break points in human history, when there is a breakdown in the basic legitimacy on which all structures and authority depend.

Whatever the setbacks to reform in 1992 and 1993, August 1991 began the revival of the Russian people and was a turning point from which there is no turning back. The convulsion of Eastern Europe in 1989 and the Westernized republics of the USSR in 1990 reached its politically decisive climax in Russia in 1991. But the failed coup not only brought an unexpected, simultaneous end to the largest empire (the Soviet Union), the most influential secular religion (Communism), and the most powerful political machine (the Soviet Communist Party) of the 20th Century; it also marked the resurgence of the hitherto quiescent Russian people who had both created and been victimized by all three of these forces. The collapse of Communism and the

Soviet Union intensified the Russian search for a positive new identity.

The crucial question for determining the fate of Russia is not this or that personality or economic program but which of two basic identities will give post-Communist Russia the geographic, psychological, and administrative coherence and unity it now lacks: authoritarian nationalism or open democracy?

There is a colossal struggle going on essentially between two forms of legitimacy: either one based on Russia's long centralized authoritarian heritage that glorifies ethnic Russia in opposition to other groups and attempts to cleanse Russia by creating internal purges and external enemies; or a new market-oriented democracy based on participation, accountability, and building new institutions from the bottom up -- with its "cleansing" of the Soviet past based on the rebirth of conscience and the transcending of social violence. The events of August 1991 moved Russia rapidly from a crude attempt at the former to an amazingly swift victory of the latter. The democratic forces gained legitimacy; but without an effective program for reconstruction, they have been steadily losing ground. Authoritarian nationalism has been winning by gradual, pseudo-constitutional steps what it was unable to win by military force.

Three political forces have recently been contending to preside over the Russian transformation: democratic reformers, authoritarian nationalists, and the so-called "middle way" of authoritarian reformers. None, however, has yet combined legitimacy with effectiveness internally, and each is pushing Russia (consciously or unconsciously) toward an external model.

The nationalists have an increasingly popular form of legitimacy without any prospect of effectiveness. They would have Russia play a role inside the former USSR like that of Serbia in the former Yugoslavia.

The authoritarian reformers (typified by the so-called "Civic Union") offer the minimal managerial effectiveness of old-line party bosses but have no legitimacy whatsoever. The secret model for many (and the likely result for Russia) is accelerated movement towards the Chinese combination of openness to the international economy with renewed internal repression.

The democratic reformers have legitimacy (Yeltsin is the only legitimate political leader) without, however, much effectiveness. Their aim is to recover Russia's lost spiritual and cultural traditions while moving Russia closer to western political and economic institutions. Particular interest in the American model is based not only on the classical Russian cultural tendency to borrow inwardly from the major power in the

West that they outwardly oppose. It is also based on the rational belief of a new generation that the continent-wide, multi-ethnic, power-dispersing experience of the United States provides a more applicable Western model for solving Russian problems than the economically centralized and ethnically homogenous experience of most other major nations.

Since legitimacy provides the most indispensable foundation for rebuilding a society (even economically), the democrats have an inherent strategic advantage over the authoritarian nationalists. But the tactical ineffectiveness of the democratic reformers has dissipated much of their appeal. By not pressing rapidly for a new constitution and free elections after their victory in August 1991 the democrats failed to create the legal and law-making framework for translating popular legitimacy into institutionally effective rule. They are paying for this failure now.

We do not realize the extent to which the over-all Western posture has demoralized the Russian democrats and helped legitimize the nationalists. After heroically repudiating their recent past and peacefully giving up a great deal of their territory, Russians feel humiliated to see their leaders treated almost as beggars at international gatherings and their people patronizingly dismissed in Western commentary as genetically incapable of democracy. Russians feel -- correctly -- that they overthrew Communism and in so doing performed a heroic deed (*podvig*), but that everyone in the West now seems to be taking the credit and responding only with "petty actions" (*malye dela*). "You spend billions on the sheiks of Kuwait," one Russian democratic leader put it to me in Moscow in December, "but give our democracy small change as if we were street people whom you want to go away."

Russia, however, is too big to go away, and its democratic reformers have been devastatingly deflated by two messages that the West has unintentionally sent the Russians during their first year of attempted democratic rule.

First is the impression that the West does not much care if Russia does become either another Serbia (since we are not doing anything to check the Serbs) or another China (since we are pouring investment into China despite its continued repression rather than into Russia's chaotic freedom).

The second message is that we simply cannot be bothered, that they made the mess and must unmake it themselves, and that, anyway, we have problems of our own. The assumption behind this view is that international dangers have ended with the Cold War and that we will not have to worry about Russia for the 10 years or so it will take them to get their economic act together.

This view mistakes an awakened Russia for a third world country and overlooks a host of increasing dangers from spreading ethnic conflicts, dispersed strategic weapons, unstable nuclear power stations, etc. Most seriously of all, this dismissive attitude assumes that Russia as presently set up can somehow muddle through.

The sad fact is that **democratic Russia cannot muddle through**. Countries with strong institutions and a social consensus muddle through, but Russia has neither. Nor does Russia yet have real political parties -- or even unifying, nation-wide structures capable of supporting democratic development such as Poland had in the Catholic Church and the Solidarity trade union movement.

The Russians as a people will, of course, survive. They slogged on to ultimate victory despite frequently poor leadership during the far more dreadful times of World War II. And, in the long run, the transformed, reform-minded younger generation is actuarially bound to prevail.

But Russia has not yet built effective national institutions for an accountable, participatory political system with an open economy. And, since the all-out internal political war on the Yeltsin government began late last autumn, Russia has been on a steady path towards authoritarian nationalist rule. This basic, chilling fact has not been widely recognized because we have simply not understood either the power and appeal of the extreme nationalistic movement or the extent to which the so-called parliament has become captive to this movement.

The last two sessions of the Congress of People's Deputies (in December and March) were almost entirely devoted to nationalistic demagoguery and the evisceration of Yeltsin's authority. But this is nothing new for this reactionary vestige of Communist rule -- a body composed of 86% former Communist *nomenklatura* insiders who, even before the August 1991 coup attempt, tried to thwart the development of the popularly-elected presidency which gives Yeltsin his legitimacy. In the first hours of the August 1991 coup attempt, leaders of the Russian parliament (a far more reactionary body than the all-union parliament) initially tried to block even Yeltsin's decision to resist the coup.

Reactionaries in Russia openly talk about the "Pinochet variant" and the "Chinese model" for reinstating order in society. The brilliant writer and Yeltsin advisor, Yury Kariakin, warned at a conference here in Washington on January 15 that the danger in Russia would be not fascism on the Italian or Spanish model but full-blown Nazism, complete with ethnic cleansing. For nearly a year now, the Russian parliament has

become a kind of demagogic theater in which ambitious, young political leaders, some of whom were formerly reformists, are playing with extreme nationalist slogans -- one of them even bragging recently in the corridors that they would turn Yeltsin "into our Hindenburg."

Yeltsin's move provides the best, probably the only basis for securing a real compromise with the parliamentary politicians to preserve the reform process. Because none of them individually nor all of them collectively has Yeltsin's popularity, they are frightened by any popular referenda; and they lack either the unity or the raw courage to mount a military coup. Thus, in a chaotic situation that cried out for a strong interim leader, Yeltsin has preempted that role in the name of continued reform -- a role that might otherwise have been claimed by a dangerous nationalist demagogue with an unreconstructed totalitarian mentality. Yeltsin has, indeed, created the conditions at last for a compromise that is not simply a further installment payment in his own surrender. We must hope that he will keep this option open -- while continuing the pressure he must bring on that vacillating body by appealing over their heads to the electorate.

There are, of course, risks involved in the course Yeltsin has taken. It would have been better had he indicated a clear timetable for elections for both a new chief executive and a new legislature. And there is even a risk that his own rule could eventually replicate many features of the nationalistic dictatorship he is currently trying to forestall. But Yeltsin has kept the peace both internally and internationally, and he has irreversibly crossed the Rubicon of reform in ways that others have not. The most important security guarantee for America and the world against the continuing nuclear danger lies in sustaining the progress toward democracy that Yeltsin and his reformers have begun. In the long and depressing history of how wars actually start in the modern age, there is one encouraging fact: democracies do not fight each other. Free people want to develop their own economies freely and celebrate their own beliefs and cultures fully. Russia in its brief post-Communist reform period has come up with a formula for the future that is entirely affirmative. Russians are seeking both to share in the democratic and market development of the post-war world that totalitarianism so long denied them and at the same time to recover the inspiring power of their own older religious traditions and cultural heritage which Marxist ideology so long suppressed and distorted.

This great people is, of course, experiencing difficulties in making its transition from an overcentralized, war-oriented economy. We know that Russians have suffered many specially difficult transitions in their long and heroic history. But this

is a different legitimacy crisis from the original Time of Troubles that ushered in 304 years of Tsarist rule under the Romanovs at the beginning of the 17th Century or from the period of revolutionary crisis at the beginning of our century which ushered in 74 years of totalitarian rule under the Communists. The situation today is profoundly different now from those times and indeed from that other special ordeal that Russia endured during its heroic resistance to Nazism in World War II.

In contrast to all those earlier crisis periods, Russia is no longer threatened by external enemies or foreign intervention in its internal affairs. It is free at last to concentrate on its own internal development. The civilized world unanimously supports the democratic transformation of Russia. The process of democratic transformation has produced remarkable good feeling between Russia and its neighbors on the once warring Eurasian heartland where so many global conflicts have occurred. The only threat to a new era of peace in this area comes from the violent, negative nationalist extremisms that represent a throwback to the ethnic and religious violence of a past era. The world community no less than the peoples of the Commonwealth of Independent States have a great stake in making sure that the kind of ethnic violence based on force against neighbors and the "ethnic cleansing" of minority groups that we have so tragically seen in Yugoslavia do not occur. There has been ethnic conflict in some parts of the former Soviet Union, but to the great credit of the new democratic process in the Russian federation, there has been no serious violence between Russians and non-Russians.

There are two compelling reasons why America and the other G-7 nations must undertake now a substantial, rapid and coordinated program of assistance in the development of Russia and the other states of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

(a) because there is a danger -- what Holmes once called a *clear and present danger* that in the midst of all their present difficulties the democratic process in Russia may be destroyed by nationalist extremists who are trying to reinstitute an authoritarian government that would dangerously increase the risk of ethnic warfare on the territory of the former Soviet Union. The consequences could be disastrous -- not merely nuclear weapons back in hostile hands, but almost certain conflict between Russians and non-Russians as well as the rise of a new authoritarianism in the new Islamic states of the former Soviet Union (and a tipping of the entire Middle East more towards a negative nationalism and fundamentalism that they have so far avoided -- the Iranian rather than the Turkish model). If the democratic experiment fails in Russia, *the United States and the West generally could be forced to go back to even higher military budgets than we faced during the Cold War. We would be faced not just with a return to the kind of gradually declining Communist government that we had learned how to deal with, we could well be*

faced with a new kind of fascist-military government fueled by racist feelings and hatred of foreigners -- a kind of violent nationalism we have not had to deal with since Hitler.

(b) but we should become involved also because there is a great opportunity for constructive involvement in what could be the greatest new economic market and successful new federal democracy of the late twentieth century. Helping Russia economically will produce jobs for Americans, because the things Russia needs to develop are what America has: skill in producing food, housing, and consumer goods; in extracting energy resources; and in developing local entrepreneurship and self-reliance. In the long run, Russia will produce a new dynamic market democracy of their own -- because that is what the younger generation wants and is already building from the bottom up. But they will do it more quickly and less disruptively for the world if they are able to avoid the period of chaos leading to dictatorship into which they are at increasing risk of falling into. A small amount of money and -- more importantly -- human contact and on-the-spot technical help now is a very good investment not only in preventing the massive military expenditures that we might otherwise need to combat a nationalist dictatorship; it is also a solid economic investment for the future. Russia is not a backward country but simply one that has suffered from cruel and inefficient misrule. It is a country with some of the greatest natural resources and one of the most educated populations in the world. They have come alive as a people and become aware of all that modern life can offer. They will not go back to Communism, but they could move on to an extremist nationalist dictatorship for a time if the democratic experiment does not produce more positive results in the lives of everyday people than it yet has.

Much more needs to be done to show international solidarity with the reform process in Russia. It is particularly important now in my view to establish a Marshall Plan-type mechanism (not necessarily Marshall Plan level resources) perhaps under Basket Two of the Helsinki Final Act to involve Russians and other CIS members together with Americans and other G-7 members in a high-level policy committee to coordinate a cooperative effort at economic and political development of the former Soviet Union. We urgently need an international body that is more politically powerful and less economically controlling than the IMF that will focus on the continuous development of Democratic Russia with Russians themselves playing a central role as Europeans did in the Marshall Plan.

We need targeted programs in a couple of areas that could have rapid impact on the economy: the food chain and the energy chain, for instance.

Technical aid during the coming planting season to key private farmers, supplying storage and delivery equipment, etc., would have immediate impact in putting more food on the urban table and validating an alternative model that works to undermine the leaden political and economic hold of the collective farms. American retired farmers and other experienced people could work with some key sector of the changing agricultural sector on the spot from the forthcoming planting season through the coming harvest.

Pushing to closure a deal or deals in Russia like the Chevron-Kazakhstan energy deal would give Russia an example of how private enterprise serves not just to extract natural wealth but also to build a human infrastructure of hospitals, environmental stations, etc. -- and an increased capability to export oil and gas would provide the quickest and most substantial new infusion of hard currency.

We need greatly increased exchanges -- and a national spotlight on the various kinds of exchange and private aid programs already flourishing: sister parish programs with churches, sister city programs that could expand in scope, student exchanges under the Freedom Support Act, and above all, immediately needed crash programs to bring over Russian manager-entrepreneurs for short, intensive work visits. The Texas-based and privately funded Freedom Exchange will bring 10,000 Russians over this year and requires just a word of support from Washington. All of these programs help develop the forces of reform growing from the bottom up and will have a long-range positive impact on whatever happens at the high political level.

The new generation of Russians needs to be rapidly exposed to the full range of private and local institutions that make for an effective pluralistic democracy. Russians have been less exposed to America in the last 80 years than the people of any other great nation, and direct human contact with America is one investment that is sure to bring positive results whatever path Russia is to follow in the short run.

Greater American and G-7 involvement in Russia is indispensable, particularly during the present crisis period. While a greater Western role cannot ultimately determine the future form that a resurgent Russia (and the other national republics) will take, the democratic West stands to be discredited for years to come if democracy fails in Russia.

In addition to rolling over debts and other economic measures, a treaty of friendship and long-range cooperation based on an endorsement of the reform program might also help the beleaguered Russian democrats. Far from competing with domestic needs, increased immediate investment in Russia would mostly involve training and linkages that could also benefit Americans -- and would save us the massive additions we would have to make to our defense budget if Russia took an authoritarian turn.

Much of the democratic movement comes from Siberia; and in some dark Siberian versions of Russian folklore, the savage bear was originally just an ordinary man. But when he was denied the bread and salt of simple human hospitality by his neighbor, he retreated in humiliation into the forest and returned unexpectedly in a transformed state to take his revenge.

Biography of James H. Billington

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Born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Dr. Billington is a 1946 graduate of Lower Merion High School, where he was valedictorian. He holds a B.A. degree from Princeton, where he was valedictorian of the class of 1950. In 1953, he earned a D.Phil. from Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar at Balliol College. He served in the U.S. Army, 1953-6, became a history instructor at Harvard in 1957, and an assistant professor of history and research fellow at the Russian Research Center in 1958. In 1961, he went to Princeton and was professor of history from 1964 to 1973. Dr. Billington has been a Guggenheim Fellow; a McCosh Faculty Fellow of Princeton University; visiting lecturer at Tel-Aviv University, the University of Leningrad, the University of Puerto Rico, and leading universities in Western and Eastern Europe and East Asia; and visiting research professor at the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. in Moscow; the University of Helsinki; and the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris.

A Phi Beta Kappa, Dr. Billington has been a longtime member of the editorial advisory board of Foreign Affairs and a former member of the editorial advisory board of Theology Today. He is the author of Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism (1958), The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture (1966), The Arts of Russia (1970), Fire in the Minds of Men: Origins of the Revolutionary Faith (1980), and Russia Transformed: Breakthrough to Hope, Moscow, August 1991 (1992).

From 1971-6, Dr. Billington was a member of the Board of Foreign Scholarships, which has executive authority over Academic exchanges with 110 countries. He was elected and served as Chairman of the Board from 1971-3.

In September 1973, Dr. Billington became director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C.: the national memorial to Woodrow Wilson. Under his directorship, eight programs were established at the Wilson Center, beginning with the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies in 1974.

On September 14, 1987, James H. Billington was sworn in as the 13th Librarian of Congress.

Dr. Billington accompanied the official leadership delegations of the U.S. House of Representatives to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. in April 1979 and July 1983 and of the U.S. Senate to the Supreme Soviet in August 1983. In October 1986, he was a member of the delegation of the Episcopal Church to the Russian Orthodox Church. In May 1987 and February 1988, he was invited by the Russian Orthodox Church to address both the 2nd and the 3rd International Church Study Conferences devoted to the Millennium of Christianity among the Eastern Slavs. In the spring of 1988, he accompanied the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to the Soviet Union and in June 1988, he accompanied President and Mrs. Reagan to the Soviet Summit in Moscow.

Dr. Billington has received honorary doctoral degrees from Lafayette College, LeMoyne College, Rhode Island College, The Catholic University of America, Furman University, New York University, University of Pittsburgh, Ball State University, George Washington University, the Virginia Theological Seminary, Dartmouth College, Williams College, Hood College and the University of Scranton. He is a member of the American Philosophical Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and is a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters of France and a recipient of the Gwanghwa Medal of the Republic of Korea.

Dr. Billington is married to Marjorie Anne (Brennan) who is a graduate of Tower Hill School, Wilmington, Delaware, and the University of Delaware. She was formerly personal secretary to Senator J. Allen Frear of Delaware. They have four children: Susan Billington Harper, a 1980 graduate of Yale University, and a 1983 graduate of Oxford University, where she was a Rhodes Scholar at Balliol College; Anne Billington Fischer, a 1983 graduate of Princeton University; James Hadley Billington, Jr., a 1984 graduate of Harvard University and 1988 graduate of the Harvard Business School; and Thomas Keator Billington, a 1986 graduate of Brown University.

US Congress
House Foreign Affairs Committee
Joint Hearing of the Sub-committees of Reps. Hamilton and Lantos
March 24, 1993

Testimony of Peter Reddaway

(Professor of Political Science, George Washington University)

It is difficult to interpret current developments in Russia objectively, because, in my opinion, inexorable forces have recently been moving most, though not all things in directions opposite to what we would like to see. In the process, these forces are undermining many of the bold and innovative initiatives that creative Russians have taken in the last few years.

To put it another way, a new "time of troubles", or smuta, has begun for the hard-pressed Russian people, and it is increasingly doubtful whether, in these circumstances, moral and material support from the West can do more than mitigate certain problems, and then mostly at the margins. We cannot "fix Russia" or "save democracy" there, desirable as those goals are. That is megalomaniac thinking. Russia is the largest country in the world, and one of great complexity and far more diversity than the United States. The forces at work in it are much too deep and powerful for us to have a major impact. If, however, we reject grandiose thinking, and look reality in the face, we can and should help in various constructive ways.

Over the last six to nine months the discourse of Russian politics across the spectrum - in political forums and the media - has been permeated by fears about "the collapse of the country", "the paralysis of power", "the danger of civil war", "the abyss of hyperinflation and mass unemployment", and so on. I believe that fears of this sort are, unfortunately, well founded.

In my opinion, central government as such in Russia - the Presidency, the Parliament, the Cabinet of Ministers - has now lost most of its authority over the country. It has become totally gridlocked and there is no near-term prospect of this disastrous situation changing. Consequently, power and authority have shifted to the leaders in the provinces. These leaders are increasingly going their own ways, passing laws without any reference to federal laws, and trying to consolidate the political and economic power of the local oligarchies that they head. Two of the ethnic republics, Tatarstan and Chechnya, have, with impunity, declared their independence from Russia, others are showing sympathy for them, and Siberia has become highly autonomous from the rest of the country.

Meanwhile, the Russian people are having to contend with inflation of over 2,000% a year, and with rampant, unchecked corruption at all levels of government. As a leading Russian expert

on the Mafia groups which control much of economic life recently said, "In the past the Mafia worked hard to insert its people into key places in government. But now that's quite unnecessary. Virtually all officials can now be bought, and the Mafia buys them every day."

Thus, what happens nowadays in Moscow politics is not likely to have much impact on the country as a whole. Burdened by the crippling legacy of communism and the profound divisions among the Russian people, President Yeltsin's government has failed to control the economy or effectively to govern the country. In foreign policy it has moved from a strongly anti-imperial position to an incipiently imperial one, as manifested in its recent policies towards, for example, Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine. In short, then, if Yeltsin departs or becomes a mere figurehead, it is unlikely that there will be a series of sharp changes in governmental policies. The rhetoric will probably be less to our liking, but the substance may not change very much, and in any case most domestic policies will be weakly, if at all implemented on the ground.

Let me conclude with a few more specific points :

1. Whatever government may be ruling in Moscow, the US government should not scale back its cuts in defense spending. Rather the reverse. The back of the Russian military has been broken for at least a decade. Its personnel level has fallen dramatically - through mass desertions, mass resignations, and mass draft evasion - to 1.7 million, and may well, according to a senior Russian official, fall to 1.2 million by the end of this year.

2. Western aid should be given not only to Russia, but also, and demonstratively, to most of the other successor states of the USSR, and especially to Ukraine. To do otherwise is to encourage imperial tendencies in Russia, with all the dangers attached to that of a new authoritarianism in Russia - and wars against its neighbors. The West should think innovatively about how it can best help in the many peace-keeping operations demanded by present and future wars around the Russian periphery, and even within Russia itself.

3. The US should quietly encourage key figures in Russia to consider forming a coalition government, or a round table process, and to aim to hold elections in the near term. The outcome of such elections is almost sure to be disturbing to us, but they might help to stabilize the polarized political situation somewhat.

4. The US should channel most aid to the localities, avoiding the generally corrupt central and local governments as much as is humanly possible.

5. As for the future, I believe that the next 2-3 years are likely to see an increasing fragmentation of Russia, with anarchy, and even perhaps civil war, developing in some areas. In due course, because politics abhors a vacuum, Russia, or most of it, is likely to be reunified, hopefully under a peaceful government, but all too possibly under a militantly nationalist one which might be comparable in many ways to that of Serbia today. In that case, ethnic cleansing could begin and Russia's neighbors would be in danger. After a time, one might hope, a more moderate government might emerge, which would set Russia again on the path to democracy and full market relations. At that point, the western aid being given now would hopefully bear fruit, and a new program of aid could be organized under more favorable circumstances than those obtaining today.

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Abridged Résumé
March 1993

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Harvard University: Soviet Area Studies M.A. Program 1962-1963
Moscow State University: Soviet Politics 1963-64
London School of Economics: Soviet Politics 1964-1965

EMPLOYMENT, TEACHING:

1989-present Professor of Political Science and International Affairs; member of The Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, The George Washington University
1986-1989 Director, Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, Washington, D.C.
1972-1985 Senior Lecturer in Political Science, London School of Economics and Political Science
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MAJOR PUBLICATIONS:**Books**

Soviet Psychiatric Abuse: The Shadow over World Psychiatry (with S. Bloch: Gollancz, 1984; Westview Press, 1985) (appeared also in Portuguese edition).
Authority, Power and Policy in the USSR (co-edited with T.H. Rigby and A.H. Brown: Macmillan, 1980; 2nd ed. 1983).
Russia's Political Hospitals: The Abuse of Psychiatry in the Soviet Union: (co-authored with S. Bloch: Gollancz, 1977) (appeared also in US, Dutch, German, Japanese, Hindi and Russian editions).
Uncensored Russia: The Human Rights Movement in the Soviet Union (Jonathan Cape, 1972) (appeared also in US, Spanish and Indian editions).
Lenin: The Man, the Theonst, the Leader: A Reappraisal (co-edited with L. Schapiro: Pall Mall Press, 1967; 2nd edition 1987, Westview Press) (appeared also in a German edition).

Selection of Recent Articles

"Russia Comes Apart: Yeltsin can't lead, but neither can anyone else," *The New York Times*, The Week in Review, January 10, 1993, section 4, p. 23
"What Future for Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States?" in Philip Rogers, ed., *The Future of European Security*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1992, pp. 21-30.
"Developments in Human Rights," in *Perestroika in the Soviet Union, Hearing before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, U.S. Congress, February 18, 1988*, US GPO 85-930, pp. 3-9, 12-23.
"Civil Society and Soviet Psychiatry," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. XL, No. 4, 1991, pp. 41-48.
"Csars of Official Psychiatry," *New Times*, Moscow, No. 5, 1991, pp. 34-35 (also in Russian and other editions of *New Times*.)

SELECTED RECENT PUBLIC LECTURES, CONFERENCES, AND CONSULTATIONS:

- "The Future of Russia over the Next 5 Years," presentation at CIA conference on the future of the Commonwealth of Independent States, January 23-24, 1992.
- "Lessons to be Learned from the Collapse of Communism in the USSR," lecture at CIA conference on the future of communist rule in China, March 20, 1992.
- "Evidence on Future Scenarios for the USSR's Successor States," testimony before the Commission on the Future of US Foreign Policy, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., April 14, 1992.
- Briefing on current trends in Russian politics for Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, November 9, 1992.
- "Current Trends in Russian Politics," presentation for State Department Policy Planning Staff, Washington, D.C., November 10, 1992.
- "Current and Future Prospects for Stability in Russia," lecture at the Defence Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C., February 3, 1993.

RECENT EDITORIAL POSITIONS:

- 1986-present: international advisory board of *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, London
- 1986-1989: editorial adviser, *The Wilson Quarterly*, Washington, D.C.
- 1991-1992: editorial board of *Report on the USSR*, Munich
- 1990 to date: editorial board of *The Journal of Democracy*, Washington, D.C.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- 1970-1987: Co-founder and Trustee of Alexander Herzen Foundation (Amsterdam)
- 1981-present: Co-founder and Executive Committee member of the International Association on Political Use of Psychiatry (Amsterdam)
- 1985-1992: Honorary Consultant, Committee on International Abuse of Psychiatry and Psychiatrists, American Psychiatric Association
- 1986-1992: Trustee of the National Council for Soviet and East European Research, Washington, D.C.
- 1986-1992: Member of the Visiting Committee for Harvard University's Russian Research Center.
- 1986-1990: Member, Executive Committee, American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Washington, D.C. chapter
- 1969-1986: Co-founder and Council member of Keston College: the Centre for the Study of Religion and Communism
- 1971-1983: Co-founder and board member of Writers and Scholars International and the Writers and Scholars Educational Trust
- 1972-1982: Executive Committee member, Great Britain - USSR Association

"The U.S. Stake in a Democratic Russia"

TESTIMONY BY

Dr. Paula J. Dobriansky
Adjunct Fellow, Hudson Institute and Board Member, National
Endowment for Democracy

Before

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs:
Subcommittee on International Security, International
Organizations and Human Rights, Subcommittee on Europe and
the Middle East

March 24, 1993

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Members:

The proposition that the United States has a major stake in the fate of Russian democracy does not require much proof. While the full resurrection of the Soviet Union is a most improbable scenario, even a temporary halt in Russia's democratic reform is certain to affect adversely American interests. One can readily conceive how even a relatively militarily-weak and semi-isolationist Russia, that abandoned the democratic path, if nothing else, could engage in destabilizing and aggressive actions vis-a-vis its neighbors, designed to "protect" Russian communities spread throughout the former Soviet Union and secure Russia's access to key military facilities and natural resources. This conduct alone would do much to reverse the positive trends in international relations that have been evident in the post-Cold War world.

Accordingly, the real question for U.S. foreign policy is not whether we have a stake in Russian democracy, but rather, how we can best help the forces of democracy in Russia. Several propositions must first be established.

We should recognize that democracy-building in Russia, or anywhere else in the world, while it deserves the utmost U.S. support, is not an enterprise certain to succeed. To be sure, democratic trends have been evident during much of the last decade. Likewise, Francis Fukuyama's thesis, stripped of its more extravagant trappings, is essentially correct. There are no more viable ideological challenges left to the Western democratic tradition.

Still, democracy in many parts of the world remains fragile, and reversions to authoritarian rule are conceivable and even likely. Yet, the promotion of democracy, albeit tempered with a sense of realism and an appropriate dose of humility, should be viewed as one of the major organizing principles of U.S. foreign policy. That is, the promotion of democracy abroad should be an integral component of U.S. foreign policy.

Another general proposition that should be understood by U.S. decision-makers is that democracy-building in Russia has both economic and security dimensions. Russia's Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev aptly noted in Foreign Affairs, "The fate of democracy in Russia will be determined to a greater extent on the economic front. Russia's democratic government is based on mass popular support. However, many of those who voted for the present leaders regarded them as individuals capable of rapidly ensuring "social justice" and of transforming into everyday life old myths about the possibility of egalitarian, universal well-being."

Additionally, I believe that a Russia mired in imperialistic and aggressive foreign policy ventures is a Russia that is unlikely to retain fidelity to democratic reforms. This kind of behavior is certain to alienate Russia from the world community and help bolster militaristic and ultra-nationalistic forces within the country.

An important proposition for U.S. decision-makers is also that democracy-building in Russia should not be viewed as an isolated endeavor, but as part of a broader effort to promote democracy among all countries previously within the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, among others. Such an approach can be in the long-term cost effective and mutually reinforcing. Conversely, the failure of democracy in one country, however large or small, has repercussions, for the others.

An essential prerequisite of a sound strategy is a sense of realism about the current conditions in Russia and what can be accomplished there. Democratic change will not occur overnight. We should acknowledge that vestiges of communism continue to dot Russia's landscape. Indeed, in thousands of Russian towns and villages, for all practical purposes, the former communist party apparatchiks still dominate political, economic and social aspects of life. Dislodging the entrenched elites throughout Russia and empowering people so as to conduct genuine democratic elections at all levels -- mayors, city councils, national parliament, etc. -- is the single most essential component of democracy-building in Russia.

The adverse and broad legacy of communism is also evident throughout Russian society. Regionalism, a lack of civic traditions, absence of respect for law and order, corruption, and cynicism greatly complicate Russia's democratic transition. Significantly, even people with a genuine commitment to democracy frequently exhibit a lack of initiative and a near total absence of administrative skills. Helping Russia overcome the communist legacy and build a civil society and effective government is another crucial component of democracy building.

Finally, another significant proposition is that our assistance should be mainly directed at building democratic institutions and values, but, at least for the time being, we should also concern ourselves with helping those Russian leaders who, in our judgment can best promote democracy. Given the recent grave events in Russia, we should support President Yeltsin, so long as he remains committed to democratic reforms in general and holding promptly a meaningful national referendum to revise the current Russian

constitution. All of Yeltsin's challengers, whatever their rhetoric might be, appear to be hostile to democratic and free-market reforms. Meanwhile, it is clear that the Congress of People's Deputies, despite its constitutionalist rhetoric, is a legacy of the Brezhnev-era constitution, and, to put it mildly, suffers from a serious legitimacy gap.

Specifically then, what types of democracy programs can and should be devised and how can our programs be made more effective?

(1) First, we should offer our blueprints and concrete assistance to help Russia lay the institutional foundation of modern democracy and formulate a short-mid- and long-term strategy for U.S. assistance. In our strategy, six key areas should be addressed: (a) the structure of government -- meaning the break-up of communist enclaves, empowering the Russian people, the establishment of limited government and a system of checks and balances, the holding of free, periodic elections at all levels; (b) rule of law -- developing an independent, functioning judicial system; (c) education, the promotion of a democratic civic culture and strong citizen associations -- this is an indispensable ingredient of democracy; (d) free, independent media -- pluralism is a cornerstone of democracy; democratic societies, almost by definition, speak with many voices; (e) free market reform -- a democratic political system, with its democratic underpinnings of free enterprise, over the long haul, offers the best prospects for economic development; (f) facilitating competent law enforcement and appropriate civil-military relations -- in both of these cases as decisive breaks with the communist past is important.

(2) Our democratic assistance programs should be targeted, timely in nature, and developed on two tracks -- governmental/non-governmental. Such institutions as the United States Information Agency (USIA) have a role to play in fostering democracy in Russia; however, it is better to utilize more fully NGOs and international organizations and funnel most assistance through them. In the past, experience has shown that they have often worked most effectively with grassroots democratic forces, and, in the long run will have an impact on the development of a democratic civic culture. The work of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is most noteworthy in this regard.

(3) Given the limited absorption capability of Russia, it is the quality and not quantity of both democratic and economic aid that counts. U.S. decision-makers should assess Russia's absorptive capability first, then determine USG goals, and evaluate how much assistance should be given to

Russia. Simply giving the Russian government handouts of money is not the answer -- most of such economic aid would be wasted as subsidies to inefficient State enterprises. However, already committed Western economic aid should be used to help individual enterprises through the establishment of a "safety net" or the creation of a private fund for entrepreneurs and management training.

(4) Democratic and economic assistance should not just go through Moscow. Local cities and villages should also be recipients -- but not solely at governmental levels, given their usually "conservative" orientation. Rather, assistance should be directed primarily to local non-governmental institutions and entities in Russia.

(5) U.S. decision-makers need to decide the scope of their assistance to the Russian Federation and not leave this issue hanging, that is, should assistance be funneled solely through Moscow, Russia or go directly to the individual republics within the Russian Federation?

Our commitment to democracy building in Russia should be more than inspiring rhetoric and the channeling of economic assistance. Indeed, it should permeate all aspects of our foreign policy -- carried out by all agencies, as well as private organizations and individuals. Our assistance efforts should focus on the six broad areas which I outlined. However, we cannot and should not, seek to prescribe precise democracy recipes. Democracy cannot be just transplanted from one soil to another. We must take into account cultural, geographic and historical differences.

In sum, I think that building a democratic, prosperous, stable and peaceful Russia is something that can be only accomplished jointly and is an endeavor in which the U.S. and indeed the world, has an enormous stake. The real issue for American statecraft is how best to help Russia accomplish this feat. Ultimately it is the Russian people and the leaders they choose that would determine the success or failure of Russia's current democratic reforms. However, it is equally clear that the U.S. and other members of the international community of nations, aided by international organizations and NGOs can greatly help Russia's democratic forces.

PAULA J. DOBRIANSKY

Dr. Paula J. Dobriansky is an Adjunct Fellow at the Hudson Institute and a member of the Board of Directors of the National Endowment for Democracy.

On August 3, 1990, the President nominated her to be the Associate Director for Policy and Programs of the United States Information Agency. On October 28, 1990, the United States Senate confirmed her appointment. As Associate Director, Dr. Dobriansky was responsible for the formulation and implementation of policy for all of USIA's program operations, including press and publications, international exhibitions, the American speakers program, and the Agency's foreign press centers.

Previously, Dr. Dobriansky served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs at the State Department, overseeing the development of U.S. human rights policy and management of the Bureau's bilateral and multilateral affairs program.

Dr. Dobriansky also served as Director of European and Soviet Affairs on the National Security Council, the White House, with primary responsibility for the development and implementation of U.S. policy toward Central and Eastern Europe. In this capacity, she played a significant role in the formulation of U.S. political and economic policies toward Poland. She was also responsible for matters related to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and U.S.-Soviet bilateral affairs.

Prior to her appointment to the National Security Council, Dr. Dobriansky was a Staff Assistant for NATO Affairs in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at the State Department, a Research Assistant on the Joint Economic Committee staff of the U.S. Congress, and served on the staff at the American Consulate in Rome, Italy.

Dr. Dobriansky received a B.S.F.S. in International Politics from Georgetown University of Foreign Service summa cum laude, an M.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard University in Soviet political/military affairs. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, was a Fulbright-Hays Scholar, and a Fellow of both the Rotary and Ford Foundations. In November 1982, Dr. Dobriansky was selected as one of the Year's Ten Most Outstanding Young Women of America. Dr. Dobriansky was also an Adviser on the U.S. Delegation to the UN Decade for Women Conference, held in Nairobi, Kenya, July 1985, and a member of the U.S. Delegation to the Paris CSCE Conference on Human Rights, June 1989. In June 1990, She was Deputy Head of the U.S. Delegation to the Copenhagen CSCE Conference on the Human Dimension. In 1990, Dr. Dobriansky was the recipient of the State Department's Superior Honor Award. She is listed in Who's Who in America and Who's Who Among American Women.

ROBERT S. STRAUSS

...Robert Strauss' community, business and public service activities cover a broad range. Raised in the small West Texas town of Stamford, he served as a Special Agent of the FBI after taking his law degree from the University of Texas. In January of 1946, he entered private law practice, and founded the firm which became Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld, with offices in Texas, Washington and Brussels, Belgium.

Mr. Strauss served as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee from 1973 to 1976. He served as Chairman of President Carter's successful election campaign in 1976, and his losing campaign in 1980. In 1977 Mr. Strauss entered the Cabinet of President Carter, serving as Special Trade Representative. Over the next two and one-half years, Mr. Strauss successfully concluded the Tokyo Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations and directed its passage through Congress which culminated in the Trade Act of 1979.

Following completion of the trade agreements, President Carter asked Mr. Strauss to serve as his Personal Representative to the Middle East Peace Negotiations.

In 1981, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award.

A popular lecturer, he speaks extensively here and abroad and has authored innumerable papers for professional journals, newspapers and magazines. He has served on the Board of Directors of numerous U.S. corporations and public institutions. Mr. Strauss occupied the Lloyd Bentsen Chair at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas lecturing to students of the LBJ Law School and Graduate School of Business.

In August 1991, Mr. Strauss was sworn in as the U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Strauss became the U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation. He resigned from the Foreign Service on November 19, 1992, and returned to private life, rejoining his former law firm.

Andrew Hacker: Blacks & Clinton

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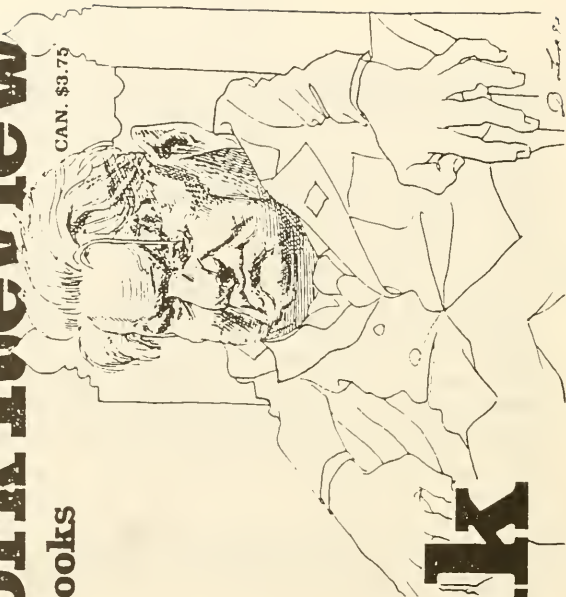
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Peter Reddaway: Russia on the Brink



Russia on the Brink?

Peter Reilaway

Russia is on the brink of coming apart. Increasingly, its regions and ethnic republics are going their own ways, trying to secure as much independence as they can from the gridlocked politics and fraying institutions of the central government. Optimists see in this the gradual realization of Aleksandr Herzen's nineteenth-century dream of a minimal state and a loose federation of self-governing communities. Realists see an ominous drift toward fragmentation and incipient anarchy.¹

The Russia of 1917 irresistibly comes to mind. The similarities between then and now seem at least to equal the differences. In March 1917 and in December 1991, successive imperial autocracies collapsed. Intoxicating periods of freedom followed, apparently opening the way to democracy and a civil society. But soon the logic of a tragically fractured political culture began to assert itself. Many groups and regions wanted to take their own particular revenge against the oppressive ways of the fallen imperial center and their representatives, but they were too diverse in their aims to be able to agree on the new order that was to replace the old one. The initially dominant forces wanted to join Western civilization in almost all respects. More traditionalist and nationalist groups insisted that Russia should not, and could not, make such a wrenching, unnatural transition. Then—in this case only in 1917—the Bolsheviks came forward to offer a "third way": a utopian, messianic ideology that appealed to elements of the popular masses and the intelligentsia, and was to be implanted in Russia by a "dictatorship of the proletariat." The Bolsheviks seized power, but the country was so divided that it soon fragmented, descending into brutal civil war, widespread anarchy, and, on the Volga, a pitiless famine that killed several million people.²

Today, by contrast, none of the extremist philosophies being offered has, so far, won mass support. Evidently seventy-four years of Communist ideology have inoculated Russians for the time being against falling for a new utopia. Other circumstances, too, are different today. The outside world is much more ready—and potentially able—to play a helpful role than it was between 1917 and 1921. Moreover, whatever happens in Russia in the next few years, the rich countries will watch events there with care, in view of the large number of nuclear weapons located in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. These differences between today and 1917 may assist Russia's Westernizing forces.

But other differences may help neo-Communist and nationalist groups. Since Russia today is not suffering from a defeat in a protracted world war, its reformist government of for-

¹See my previous editorials in *The New York Review* on November 7, 1991, January 31, 1991, August 17, 1989, August 18, 1988, May 28, 1987, and October 10, 1985.

mer Communists is at least spared the revolutionizing effects on its population of military defeats like those that buffeted the Provisional Government in 1917. Moreover, beneath the surface of the tsarist autocracy, elements of a new order—political movements, legal institutions, and industries—had been developing for some time. So when tsarism disintegrated, the collapse was decisive, and new, revolutionary institutions sprang up quickly. There was, in other words, a significant chance for a new order to be born.³

By contrast, under the more oppressive Soviet system, fewer elements of a new order were able to develop beneath the surface. In addition, the system collapsed much more suddenly

have affected the middle and older generations more than the younger, and perhaps those with successful careers more than ordinary people. But Russian politics and the Russian press and television reveal every day the pain that has been inflicted on millions of people.

During the last four years we can list the following traumatic events: 1) the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in 1989 from Afghanistan; "the USSR's Vietnam," after they had failed in their mission, lost 15,000 of their own men, and contributed to the deaths of one out of 15 million Afghans; and to the flight of a further 5 million abroad as refugees from their homeland; 2) the sudden loss of the entire "external," East European, empire in 1989,



and unexpectedly than tsarism did. As a result, the huge task that Yeltsin rashly took on of creating a brand-new, comprehensive, Westernized order was extremely daunting—even, in the short term at least, impossible. To try to launch simultaneously a political revolution, an economic revolution, and a social revolution, in a national culture that was not in fact ready for revolution at all, was to impose an intolerable burden on the Russian people. To do so when that people was going through a series of psychological blows of great severity was, in my view, even more foolhardy. True, the psychological dislocations

followed by the humiliating withdrawal of troops, security agencies, and other personnel; 3) the much feared and supposedly unthinkable reunification of Germany in 1990; 4) the dramatic end, in August 1991, of three quarters of a century of Communist Party rule, which also marked the final realization by many people that the entire utopian program of communism, in the name of which tens of millions of lives had been sacrificed, had been a monstrous fraud; 5) the sudden loss four months later of the "international" empire, as the Soviet Union split into fifteen independent states, with 25 million Russians finding themselves residents of "foreign countries"; 6) the dawning realization that the magical "shock therapy" that Jeffrey Sachs, the International Monetary Fund, Boris Yeltsin, and Yegor Gaidar had told the Russians would in three or four years, and with only limited pain, grant them the salvation of free markets, is also a fraud—having mean-

²The judicious conclusions of H. J. White in his chapter "Civil Rights and the Provisional Government" in O. Crisp and I. Edmondson, editors, *Civil Rights in Imperial Russia* (Oxford University Press/London Press, 1989), stimulated my thinking on comparisons between 1917 and the present.

while done much to wipe out everyone's savings and produce widespread poverty and mounting fear of economic collapse; and 7) the perception that now Russia, too, is threatened with the humiliation and dangers of fragmentation and collapse.

For many Russians, all this does not just represent an identity crisis of the sort that Dean Acheson accurately diagnosed in the British following World War II, when he noted that they had lost an empire and not yet found a role. It is something much worse: a many-layered feeling of moral and spiritual injury, a loss of one's bearings, one's sense of self and of society, bewilderment and frustration at the gaping divisions among one's own people, uncertainty about even the physical dimensions of one's country, let alone its values, and a growing fear of still greater insults and privations to come. Emotional wounds as deep as these tend to breed anger, hatred, self-disgust, and aggressiveness. Such emotions can only improve the political prospects for the nationalists and neo-Communists, at any rate for a time.

In view of these circumstances, it is perhaps surprising how many bold and creative initiatives forward-looking Russians have taken in the last year and a half. In politics, for example, they have studied foreign models and worked hard to introduce a separation of powers, to create political parties, to protect human rights, to negotiate, not fight, when conflicts have arisen with neighboring countries, and so on. Yet their efforts often seem like drops in a huge and bottomless bucket, and the popular Western perception that Russia is now a democracy is, to put it mildly, exaggerated.¹

While President Yeltsin was elected in a free popular vote, few other institutions or procedures score high marks for their democratic content or commitment. The parliament, for instance, was elected in March 1991 in only partly free conditions. Many of its members are directors of state-owned farms, factories, or other large institutions who have little interest in representing their constituents. They prefer to concern themselves with the interests of the professional "corporations" they belong to; they enjoy parliamentarians' privileges like trips abroad or access to new cars, while lobbying for cushy jobs in Moscow or abroad.

Such behavior is encouraged by the fact that political parties have failed as yet to put down roots in society, with the result that party and factional discipline in the legislature is very weak. Correspondingly, the power of the autocratic, aggressive, and unpredictable speaker of parliament, Ruslan Khasbulatov, is inordinately large. He manipulates parliamentary procedures, votes, and committees by employing a large staff and, until recently, five

¹For a useful review of the undemocratic working of most of the institutions of Russian government, see Julia Wilsniewsky, "Anti-democratic Tendencies in Russian Policy-Making," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 1, No. 45 (November 1992), pp. 21-25.

thousand guards, by controlling a wide array of privileges, and by acting, as if he, as chief legislator, has the same status as the head of the executive, the president. He has again and again kept the support of an insecure parliament of dubious legitimacy by provoking fierce clashes with Yeltsin and the executive, then saying he really backs Yeltsin, then provoking a new clash.

Nonetheless, for one year, ending on December 1, 1992, parliament gave Yeltsin the power to rule by decree on most issues, except for such sensitive ones as declaring emergency rule or calling a referendum. As a result, most of the central government's legislation in 1992 took the form of presidential decrees. Some of these were poorly or impulsively drafted. "Far from all of them, as the country's top legal officer complained, could be reconciled with recent legislation," and many were never carried out. As for the government, it has had little cohesion and no sense of collective responsibility. The vice president, Aleksandr Rutskoi, for instance, has for many months denounced in sweeping terms the government's basic strategy for economic reform. For this, he received an effective punishment from Yeltsin, his public approval rating went up sharply in the polls, and people began to wonder about Yeltsin's commitment to shock therapy.

Local government has been even less democratic than central government. Arguing that the local legislatures and their executive organs were too conservative to be trusted with carrying out the government's policies, Yeltsin personally appointed chief executives to the regions and large cities. To try to ensure that these officials would not be dominated by the local political bosses, he also appointed "representatives of the president" to monitor their work and ensure that they carried out the center's policies and laws. The result, however, have not been impressive. In the Tomsk region, for example, the president's unusually able and effective representative recently calculated that he had only managed to get about 30 percent of the central government legislation put into effect locally. And Yeltsin charged local officials with "weakening Russia's nascent statehood" by ignoring his decrees and government resolutions.²

Rather than obey unwanted laws of the central government, the local authorities prefer to pass legislation that suits themselves. In doing so, they show little regard for the rule of law in Russia. According to the procurator-general, Valentin Stepankov whose staff of 70,000 performs functions equivalent to those of both the attorney general's office and the General Accounting Office in America—the

²See the speech by Procurator-General Stepankov in *Federal Broadcast Information Service Eurasia (FBIS)*, FBIS SOV-92-2405, December 14, 1992, pp. 31-35, at p. 33.

³The Tomsk figure was reported by the representative himself, Stepan Sulakshin, at a seminar at the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, Washington, DC, on October 8, 1992. For Yeltsin's charges see *IAR LASS*, September 11, 1992, as quoted in A. Rahr, "Yeltsin Faces New Political Challenges," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 1, No. 47 (October 1992), p. 5.

Procuracy filed in 1992 more than 200,000 formal protests against illegal actions by local authorities. Local officials had, for example, failed to send to Moscow the tax money they had collected, and, in 16,000 cases, they had passed official acts that violated the laws of the country.³ When challenged in such cases, they have typically replied that the central government must change its own laws to accommodate theirs.⁴ Alternatively, according to Stepankov, they have written him letters demanding the dismissal of troublesome local procurators, or requesting that the law be changed so that such procurators would be subordinate to themselves, not the center.

Tightly seeing in all this "a serious threat," Stepankov created an uproar at the recent Congress of People's Deputies by announcing that he was preparing a report for the president on "the most malicious violators of the law" among the heads of local government, with a view to leaving them dismissed. He reminded the deputies that "a unified constitutional legal system is the pivot of our entire Federation." He warned that the entire system "is beginning to unravel." As one of his examples, he described how officials in the self-proclaimed independent republic of Chechnya had forced the local procurator to leave at the point of a machine gun.

More generally, Stepankov concluded that all the official assurances that the state was now based on law "do not correspond with what is really happening today." Those in power do things their own way, and their "political or private ambitions continue to dominate as before." All this undermines "the trust of ordinary people in the possibility of changing or achieving anything." Moreover, he said, crime is soaring, partly because "the old system of crime prevention has collapsed." A new system needs to be built "on quite different principles." Stepankov's powerful speech was accompanied by equally alarmist and detailed reports to the congress from the ministers of security and internal affairs.⁵

The insubordination of officials in the localities has deep roots. During the Soviet period they were angry but largely impotent when the central government routinely took from them more of their resources in taxes and goods than it gave back in services and investment. Moscow then spent the surplus on things of little or no interest to the regions, such as the KGB, foreign aid, subversion abroad, and luxury for elite cadres of officials. Then in 1989 Soviet republics began proclaiming their "sovereignty," so as to control more of their own affairs. The regions and cities of Russia were impressed by this daring, and followed suit. When a partially democratic system designed to represent the voters in new Soviet and republican parties

⁴Stepanov, *FBIS*, p. 33.

⁵Talk by Andrei Kortunov at the American Enterprise Institute, Washington, DC, December 17, 1992.

⁶Stepanov, *FBIS*, pp. 32, 35, 31. The speeches by Minister of Security Viktor Baranikov and Minister of Internal Affairs Viktor Yerin are in *FBIS*, December 14, 1992, pp. 26, 31 and 35, 39.

ments was set up during the same year, has failed, unfortunately, to counter the trend to local sovereignty. As mentioned above, the lack of an effective party system, coupled with the less than free nature of the elections and the limited powers of the parliaments, all combined to make the deputies ineffectual as representatives of their constituencies. Many voters, moreover, disillusioned by the remote and snubbing politicians in Moscow and by increasing economic hardship, soon lost faith in both national and local elections. Consequently, no movement to re-all deputized deputies was launched, and public apathy toward politics deepened.

All this has made it even easier than before for the small groups of top-officials and factory directors, who would retain power in the towns and regions to increase what the Moscow politician Andrei Kortunov aptly calls "the feudalization of the country."¹⁷ These tough-minded men are, with few exceptions, no strangers to power, having held important posts in the Soviet period, but unlike some of their colleagues they have been flexible enough to adapt to the emergence of semidemocratic institutions, and then to keep them weak. They seem also to have successfully "coopted" most of Yeltsin's local appointees. That done, many of them are now maneuvering to privatize the huge assets of the state to their own advantage, often, it seems, working with the proliferating "mafias," private business groups operating illegally or semilegally.¹⁸ The resulting covert syndicates drawn from the mafia and local government sell goods abroad without informing Moscow, and bribe their way through customs. They send to Moscow, by current estimates, only 35 to 40 percent of the taxes the government has budgeted for. They develop cozy relationships with commanders of local military and police units, and with local courts and KGB chiefs. As a result, if Yeltsin's trusted adviser Gennadiy Buzhuk is correct, by October of this past year the government had lost control over the police and procuratory offices in many regions.¹⁹

At the same time there have been other more promising initiatives, like the local economic strategy that the leaders of the Nizhny Novgorod region asked the economist Giryon Yavlinsky to prepare for them.²⁰ But the pattern I have described seems generally to prevail, and this sort of regionalism undermines democratic trends and sears off foreign invest-

ment. Especially in regions where ethnic tensions are acute, the new local bossism may facilitate violence and secession. And ultimately, if the country falls apart, anarchy and rule by war lords, possibly of the Bosnian or Lebanese types, could follow.

A foreshadow of such potential developments is currently unfolding in the south of Russia. Here in the northern Caucasus, the declaration of independence from Russia by the republic of Chechnya, with a population of nearly a million has lasted for more than a year, and still goes unopposed. While using force to end the secession would have been a disastrous and bloody mistake, reluctantly tolerating secession has encouraged a movement among other peoples of the region to imitate the Chechens. The chief sponsor of this movement called the Federation of Peoples of the Caucasus, is, not surprisingly, the Chechen Republic. At the same time, old feuds between the local peoples are flaring up. A dispute between the Ossetes and the Ingush over a piece of land recently caused hundreds of deaths, and



prompted Moscow to send several thousand troops to try to restore order.

Some liberal Russians believe their country would be wise to cut its losses, abandon the chronic strife in the north Caucasus, and redraw Russia's border a few hundred miles to the north. But the rising tide of Russian nationalism, strengthened by the force of the recent traumas I have mentioned, makes this option unrealistic for the time being. Meanwhile, the Caucasian example is helping to inspire secessionist trends in the very center of Russia, along the Volga. Tatarstan, with four million inhabitants, has declared itself an independent state, but is ready for diplomatic reasons to sign a document saying that it is still part of Russia — even though its newly adopted constitution makes no mention of this. Recently, strong Tatar nationalist groups started using tactics similar to those of the Chechens, moving to set up with neighboring Cossacks and others a "Confederation of Peoples of the Volga and Ural Regions."²¹ While this body would have mainly economic goals and would not apparently advocate secession, its sponsors clearly hope that it will promote developments of the Tatar kind in nearby regions. This in turn would help the movements for Siberian independence.

¹⁷Interfax news agency, Moscow, December 3, 1992.

2.

Boris Yeltsin is a brave man with some good qualities, and historians may perhaps conclude that when the USSR collapsed Russia found itself in such unattractive circumstances that it was essentially unopposable. Still, Yeltsin has not in my opinion been a good leader of Russia during the last year. The responsibility for some of the repressive trends I have described seems to me to be at his door. Above all, he has made serious strategic errors that a wiser leader would have avoided.

The greatest error was to be seduced in October 1991 by the fatal attractions of economic shock therapy (ES1) whose mechanistic simplicity and confident promise of quick, dramatic results appealed to his Bolshevik-trained mind. He did not like to admit that Russian political culture (heavily influenced of course by Bolshevik rule) would be an obstacle that could not be surmounted in a few years. He did, however, admit openly that he was taking a gamble which, if it failed, would end his career. And soon he began to fear seriously that he had made a bad choice. Presumably because of this he never launched the extensive and continuing propaganda campaign that would have been essential if the Russian people were to be persuaded of ES1's virtues and necessity. True, Yeltsin spoke favorably of ES1 and its architect Yegor Gaidar, especially when his audiences were foreign. But he soon stopped giving Gaidar strong and direct support and adopted a position of being "above the fray." By implication he was accepting that some members of his administration were either openly or privately against ES1; he therefore did not oppose policies certain to undermine ES1, such as increasing the money supply and stepping up credits to failing industries. But he did not even come close to repudiating ES1 until, following his defeat by the anti-ES1 parliament in December, he hinted that he was prepared to abandon the ES1 approach. While on a visit to China, he praised that country's economy and rising standard of living, and said: "The Chinese tactic of reform is not to hurry, not to force, without revolutions, without cataclysms, which is very important, and I think that for us it has a certain significance. Russia doesn't need revolutions or cataclysms either."²²

Yeltsin's other strategic errors may derive in large measure from this first one. For he clearly understood in principle the necessity if his extraordinarily bold revolutions were to have any chance — of building up the power and authority of the presidency, of giving it a strong social and political base, and of leading the revolution himself, as Atatürk did in Turkey. Yet apart from obtaining extra powers for one year from the parliament in December 1991, he did remarkably little to achieve these goals — perhaps because he feared the structure of ES1 might in fact be built on sand. Above all, he failed to translate the 57 percent of the presidential election vote that he received in June 1991 into a real political base. He could have done this a year ago by capitalizing on his election victory, his strong leadership of the resistance to the coup attempt of two

²²The Washington Post, December 19, 1992, p. A10.

¹⁷Talk by Andrei Kortunov, December 17, 1992.

¹⁸See Barannikov and Yerin, *IUS*, pp. 27-28, 35-37, and Stepankov, *IUS*, pp. 31, 33.

¹⁹Account of a Moscow press conference, *The Guardian*, October 19, 1992, as quoted in Alexander Rahr's useful article "A Russian Paradox: Democrats Support Emergency Powers," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 1, No. 48 (December 1992), p. 15.

²⁰See the articles about this strategy in *Sobitva*, No. 32 (August 1992), pp. 6-7, and *Komsomolskaya pravda* (August 14, 1992), p. 7, and the revealingly outspoken interview by Boris Nemtsov, the spokesman for Nizhny Novgorod region, in *Pravda*, November 12, 1992, p. 4.

months later, and his skillful pursuit of Russia's interests amid the chaos of the USSR's collapse in December. He could then have promptly formed his own party and called new parliamentary elections. These would have given him a large majority of deputies, to use as legislative troops.

Instead, despite much wavering over many months, Yeltsin failed to call elections and claimed he deserved credit for not forming his own party or allying himself openly with any existing parties. He made himself a lone duck by announcing that he would be a one-term president, and, from April onward, quietly succumbed to pressure and sacrificed some of his supporters in the administration while appointing ministers opposed to shock therapy. As a result, a hostile, only semi-legitimate parliament, with a popular approval rating of some 5 percent, survived to make life increasingly unpleasant for him. It could do this partly because the government's watered-down *ESU* policies soon caused inflation to rise to 25 percent a month. This disturbed the IMF, the Western industrial nations, and would-be foreign investors. It made all Russians—even the intensely envied rich—feel economically insecure, and pushed Yeltsin's popular approval rating down to the range of 30 percent, at which point calling a referendum became risky. The parliament also learned that if it barked loudly enough, Yeltsin would rarely fight—except to make empty threats about abolishing it through a referendum and would usually make quiet concessions to it.

That brings us to Yeltsin's third big error. He appears to have believed that if he voluntarily made concessions to the parliament, it would be grateful to him and become more cooperative. However, Khasbulatov and the parliament could sense his growing political weakness, and always ended by demanding more. The legislature was more hostile to both *ESU* and Yeltsin personally than Yeltsin—who was understandably befuddled by Khasbulatov's wily tactics—seemed to realize. Only in November, panicked by the approach of the fateful congress, did he suddenly call for the creation of a presidential party to support him. But just as he has squandered much of his popular support by not using it, and his friends' support by abandoning them, now he is politically too weak for such a party, if it is ever formed, to become a serious force.

Yeltsin's fourth big error was to go against his sound initial instinct and put much too great a store on aid from the West. This laid him wide open to charges from across the political spectrum: that he was naive in thinking both that the aid would be easy to get and that it would give the economy a boost whenever it did arrive; that he did not trust the Russian people and regarded them as idle; that he was blind not to see that the West really wanted a weak Russia; and that, as members of the hard right put it, he and his team were willing agents of the West who were "occupying" Russia in order to bring about its territorial, economic, military, and cultural destruction.

During the summer, Yeltsin the cautious trimmer, looking more and more

like the Gorbachev of 1990 and 1991, decided that in order to be politically safe, he must shift his government from its center-left position toward the political center. At first he made subtle hints to this effect, but in September he had a senior adviser, Sergei Stankevich, say flatly that a government based mainly on the central "Civic Union" group, or even a center-right coalition, was now desirable, and that this was Yeltsin's opinion too.¹⁵ This was an invitation for Khasbulatov, behind his smoke and mirrors, to go for Yeltsin's jugular. First, using his armed guards, he orchestrated the parliament's attempt to take over the generally pro-Yeltsin *Izvestia*, which had earlier belonged to the USSR parliament.¹⁶ Then, on October 21, the parliament rejected by a two-to-one margin Yeltsin's insistent request that the next biannual session of the Congress of People's Deputies—the larger parliamentary body of 1,041 members, which elects a rotating standing parliament of one quarter the size, the Supreme Soviet—be postponed from December until the spring, on the grounds that the draft of Russia's new constitution was not yet ready. And then the parliament passed a draft constitutional amendment which made government ministers primarily answerable to the parliament, not to the prime minister and the president. At the subsequent congress the amendment, in a fiercely contested ballot, was not ratified because it just failed to get the votes of two thirds (or 694) of the deputies, passing only by 600 to 133 (the rest abstaining or absent).

In the autumn Yeltsin fought back, parrying the assault on *Izvestia* and strenuously seeking the support of such key constituencies as the industrial managers, the military, and provincial leaders. He sent Gaidar to work out a compromise between the economic programs of the government and the Civic Union, a task that, despite claims of success, ultimately proved impossible. The industrialists of the union, mainly former Communist officials, were open to reform but not revolution; they would not swallow enough of Gaidar's *ESU* medicine, even though this was by now heavily watered down. At the same time, most of the democratic left, including trusted members of Yeltsin's administration, convinced that the right was planning some sort of coup, urged him to declare a state of emergency (which could only be done legally with the parliament's consent) and disperse the parliament.

Such ideas, which had reportedly been urged on Yeltsin by Gennady Iudin since at least July, were debated inconclusively at a meeting of the cabinet on October 24.¹⁷ A few days later they were apparently debated again in a smaller, perhaps in formal meeting, at which the ministers of security and internal affairs report-

¹⁵See *Rossiiskie vesti*, September 17, 1992.

¹⁶On this complex episode see Jamey Gambrell, "Moscow: The Front Page," *The New York Review*, October 8, 1992.

¹⁷On the events of October and November see Rahr, "A Russian Paradox."

edly said that their organizations, "by virtue of their general condition and state of morale, are not ready to carry out the measures suggested by the president."¹⁰

This may have been decisive for Yeltsin. Certainly the polarization and tensions in Moscow were becoming dangerously explosive. For example, an anonymous "Group of generals and officers of the General Staff and the headquarters of the Moscow Military District" published a statement warning that if Yeltsin were to disperse the parliament, this would be an illegal coup and that the "Russian Armed Forces will confront the organizers of the putsch and crush it by force."¹¹ In view of the extreme confusion and disarray in the Russian military, this group was probably small and even more probably Hurling. But no one could be sure. The Soviet military is in a degenerate state. A weak and widely discharged minister of defense is in charge. Enormous military resources have been lost to the former Soviet republics. As divisions are pushed out of various foreign countries and arriving home, competition for jobs and scarce apartments has become fierce. Draft evasion is so rampant that the goal of reducing total personnel to 1.5 million by 1995 has changed to trying to keep it up to 1.2 million in 1993.¹² In these circumstances the possibility that some enraged hard-line officers might do something wild cannot be completely discounted.

3.

The congress that met between December 1 and 14 was a long and turbulent event, and I can touch here only on some of its main developments. The congress was a symptom of Russia's travails and it is not likely to affect the deep political and psychological processes at work in the country. By reaching some messy compromises it avoided either a complete gridlock of Russian government or factional armed clashes on the streets. Khasbulatov was probably right when he said that "the congress has established itself as the supreme organ of state power."¹³ Although he and the parliament are low in popular esteem, they had nonetheless expressed the deep anxiety and despair of a large part of the population, and on most of the central issues they brilliantly out-

¹⁰*Idea*, No. 45 (November 8-14, 1992). See also the comments on this report in *Izvestia*, November 13, 1992. The *Idea* report, attributed to "competent sources," referred to a Security Council meeting and also said that Defense Minister Grachev had supported introducing a state of emergency. *Idea*, No. 47 (November 22-28, 1992), carried a carefully worded denial by Grachev that he had taken this position: "No such meeting of the Security Council had taken place." However, the ministers of security and internal affairs have not denied the *Idea* report.

¹¹*Idea*, No. 47 (November 22-28, 1992), p. 1.

¹²See the speech by the congress by S. Stepanin, chair of the Supreme Soviet's defense committee, in *Azovskaya zvezda*, December 9, 1992, p. 2.

¹³*The Washington Post*, December 15, 1992, p. A16.

nourished the Yeltsin forces.

Probably the most ominous outcome of the congress was that while it greatly weakened Yeltsin, it produced no one who seems capable of taking his place. Thus Russia will have even weaker leadership than before, just when it needs a very strong and skillful president who might be able to arrest the trends toward disintegration.

The unfortunate Yeltsin spent much of the congress bargaining for votes in simply back rooms. In a few cases he got just enough, but in too many he did not. He suffered many humiliations. Despite his pleas for peace between the executive and the legislature and invoking the danger of "a ruthless civil war," his request for full control over economic policy was rejected. He was not allowed to keep Gaidar either as prime minister or acting prime minister, even though he sacrificed some of his closest colleagues both before and during the congress, gave the congress vote power over the choice of four key ministers as well as giving up considerable powers over the choice of the prime minister, and promised to purge the bureaucracy of liberals. He felt compelled to pick as prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, an undistinguished, traditional, industrial apparatchik from the Communist past.

Chernomyrdin's appointment delighted the center and right, including many former Communists such as Arkady Volynsky, one of the main leaders of the centrist Civic Union. It also horrified left-wing groups—including such people as Geliy Yakunin and Pyotr Filipov—which made plans to go into formal opposition to Yeltsin and to try to rebuild the popular support for the left that he has helped to destroy.¹⁴ But the constitution did not end here. When Gaidar was first rejected, Yeltsin tried the new tactic of exploding with anger and demanding a quick, clear-cut national referendum in which the public would "choose me or the Congress!" But he was forced to agree to a referendum on the general principles of a new constitution, and to a date four months hence, when his approval rating is likely to stand a lot lower than it does today. Few of his former allies had supported his referendum plan, and some, like the dynamic Boris Nemtsov of Nizhny Novgorod, announced that they would not help him win the referendum in the regions they run.¹⁵ One of his most hard-line and fastest rising officials, Yuri Skukov, clearly implied that pursuing the referendum "could only lead to general chaos and the disintegration of Russia."¹⁶ Congress also rejected Yeltsin's proposal that he should be given the power to call a referendum without its agreement. Finally, after excoriating Khasbulatov on December 10, Yeltsin was compelled to shake his head demonstratively in front of the congress two days later, to mark the convoluted compromise they had eventually reached.

Yeltsin is politically weak and can not expect to recover his former power. The people who voted for him as president, already angered by Yeltsin's proposal that he should be given the power to call a referendum without its agreement. Finally, after excoriating Khasbulatov on December 10, Yeltsin was compelled to shake his head demonstratively in front of the congress two days later, to mark the convoluted compromise they had eventually reached.

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¹⁴*The Wall Street Journal*, December 11, 1992.

¹⁵Radio Rossi broadcast, December 10, 1992, translated in THIS SIDE 92 2308, p. 39.

The greatest immediate danger is

From no conversation with Alek-

Russian foreign policy seems likely to swing toward "neutrality" between the West and China, that is, away from its previously strong pro-Western stance. This will probably exacerbate the already growing tensions over Western aid, which is predicated on steady Russian movement toward the market economy. More than 200,000 Russian emigrants are being sent abroad in the so-called "parade" of the hard right, though they, optimistically, expect to come to power quite soon and openly embrace extreme nationalism. Sometimes nationalists have gone so far that they too will probably soon advocate that an official embargo be placed on all emigrants coming from Moscow.

Political power in Moscow and the

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Russia Comes Apart

By Peter Reddaway

WASHINGTON

Each week it gets harder not to feel a deep foreboding about Russia. The many warnings that Russians themselves — including Presidents Gorbachev and Yeltsin — have issued since 1989 about trends toward breakdown, fragmentation, anarchy and civil war sound steadily more real. True, the recent congress of the Russian Parliament just avoided becoming the brawl that it threatened to turn into at one point. But the cost was postponing painful decisions, deepening the gridlock of government and weakening Mr. Yeltsin to the point where Mr. Gorbachev's charge that he is "losing his grip" rang true.

It is still possible in theory to sketch a more hopeful scenario, based on the legendary optimism of Russians in the face of chaos and deprivation. We may also hope that, before too long, Russia will emerge from its agonies and set itself on the road to a better future. And we can be certain that far from all the heroic efforts made by Russians in recent years to develop businesses, build democratic institutions, strengthen religious freedom and foster a free culture will be wasted.

But in the short run the odds are overwhelmingly against the success of most of these efforts. First, Russia's rebirth as an independent state came much too suddenly. The 14 other countries created by the implosion of the Soviet Union were politically unstable and, in most cases, full of both anti-Russian resentments and large cohorts of Russian expatriates — about 25 million in all.

Second, in October 1991 Mr. Yeltsin committed the fatal mistake of maximalism. To the already incipient revolutions in politics and society he added the unrealistic goal of transforming a deeply entrenched socialist economy into a capitalist one in a couple of

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years. He did this even though most of the political and cultural prerequisites for success — especially a national consensus, such as the Poles had in 1990 — were absent.

In launching the three revolutions, Mr. Yeltsin's Government was good at destroying old institutions and symbols. Because a national consensus about the future was lacking, however, it failed to create viable alternatives. This bred growing popular feelings of insecurity, fear and despair.

In the economy, for example, the system of running everything from the center was largely destroyed, but too few elements of a genuine market appeared in its place. Real incomes went down by 50 percent in six months and production plummeted by 24 percent in 1992. Hyperinflation of more than 2,000 percent a year wiped out the savings of everyone except the shadowy syndicates of officials and business operators who have put their wealth into hard currency and parked much of it abroad.

In politics, Mr. Yeltsin compounded his mistake over shock therapy by failing to turn his popular support into a usable political base like a party, by appealing, not replacing, the largely Communist Parliament, and by putting too many eggs in the wobbly basket of Western aid. As a result, he came to look more and more like a trimmer and bluffer, like the Gorbachev of *Perestroika* (1979-81).

Last month he was repeatedly humiliated by the conservative majority of the Parliament, an institution with a popular approval rating of 5 percent which is responsible in practice to no one. He lost his Prime Minister, he lost the right to appoint key ministers without parliamentary approval, he lost his closest allies by removing them in return for unreliable assurances of support from the Civic Union of disunited centrists, and he lost out when he demanded a quick referendum on whether the people trusted him or the Parliament.

Instead, he was forced to agree to a referendum this April on the basic principles of

Russia's long-delayed post-Communist Constitution. If he and the Parliament cannot produce a compromise by then, they will ask the people to choose between two alternative texts. This exercise may well end up resolving nothing.

The Parliament is rivaled in unpopularity by Mr. Yeltsin's Government. As crime soars, Russia's top legal officer laments that the system of crime prevention "has collapsed." In October the Ministers of Police and State Security reportedly told Mr. Yeltsin that they could not agree to his declaring a state of emergency, because discipline among their men was too low for them to enforce it. The Minister of Defense, widely seen as incompetent, presides over a military in serious decay.

What, then, does all this say about Russia's future? In a situation reminiscent of 1917, where political divisions are profound, centrifugal tendencies strong and economic conditions critical, the overriding need is for a strong, legitimate leader, a viable plan for reversing the negative trends, and an ability by the central government to work well with provincial leaders.

Tragically, Russia does not have such a

leader. Mr. Yeltsin has lost the trust of the people, and no one else has gained it. Through assault and battery the Parliament has obtained inordinate power, paralyzing government and deepening the conviction of the provinces that they must seek their salvation elsewhere.

In these circumstances the only hope would seem to lie in holding new elections. But such elections are not required for two and three more years respectively, and neither Mr. Yeltsin nor the Congress appears to relish the risk of facing a hostile and apathetic electorate. The outcome of the referendum may deepen their apprehension.

An alternative much touted by pro-Yeltsin ministers and others would be to abandon the democratic revolution, for a time at least, and impose authoritarian rule through a state of emer-



Yeltsin
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but neither can
anyone else.

gency. But the essential instruments of the police and the army are thought too unreliable, and the country is too divided. In the view of Yuri Skokov, a hard-line member of the Government, even Mr. Yeltsin's much less drastic plan of insisting on the quick referendum "could only lead to general chaos and the disintegration of Russia."

Members of the current Government span much of the political spectrum, with their center of gravity at present in the middle, but likely to move — with the probable ouster of Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and possibly others — toward the center-right. Prime

Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin favors some probably unfeasible economic re-centralization, such as his recently announced price controls on food. The more liberal director of economic strategy, Boris Fyodorov, will doubtless pull in the opposite direction. If, as is all too likely, this produces both deepening hyperinflation and mounting unemployment, then the Government will surely fall. At that point it is hard to see where Mr. Yeltsin could turn except further to the right.

Some influential rightists like Aleksandr Prokhanov, a leader of the militantly anti-Western National Salvation Front, see this scenario as probable and are adjusting their tactics accordingly. Instead of impeaching Mr. Yeltsin, as they previously demanded, they now say they will strip him of all real power, but keep him as a figurehead, at least for a time. But they are also aware of their as yet limited support, and admit that they too may prove unable to rule the fragile country effectively.

The future may therefore see a succession of weak governments in Moscow that exercise less and less control over the regions. This could easily change, though, if one such government tried to impose a dictatorship by force. Then the country would break up and, as in 1919-21, a brutal civil war could all too easily ensue.

How frayed are the ties that still hold most of Russia together? Economically they are weakening quite fast. Provinces pursue policies without consulting Moscow, and send Moscow as few taxes as possible. They have recently passed 16,000 acts which violate federal statutes. Like their Moscow colleagues, some provincial leaders work with factory directors and "malia" elements to acquire state assets for themselves, thus causing ordinary people to reckon that economic power is, like political power, mostly in the hands of the more flexible section of the Communist elite, that is, more or less where it was before.

In Russia's ethnic enclaves many politicians espouse anti-Russian secessionism. In the north Caucasus, the example of the Chechens' unpunished secession could lead to the whole region, with five million inhabitants, moving even more out of Moscow's control. Private Cossack armies are offering to restore this control, and thus renew the policing services they performed for the czars. They have even imposed "popular justice" in some areas, with occasional public floggings.

Meanwhile, on the Volga, the successful declaration of independence by the Tatars increases the danger that the neighboring Bashkirs, Chuvash and others will follow suit, and Russia will be virtually cut in half. In that case, the flourishing independence movements of Siberia may get their chance and, as they did 75 years ago, form their own republics. To sum up, the suneys of the Russian state are weak and getting weaker.

They will not, alas, be helped by Russia's relations with the outside world. While the West might mitigate some difficulties with carefully devised assistance, Russia's immediate neighbors are likely to have a greater and mainly negative influence. Since most of these states are just as unstable, Russia is likely to be drawn into armed conflicts within them and between them, as has already happened in Moldova, Tadzhikistan and the Caucasus.

If these pessimistic speculations prove to be somewhere near the mark and Russia in the next year or two fragments, the consequences would be serious for many countries, and probably not only in the short term. Most likely to reunite a dismembered country is a powerful movement with an extremist ideology. This, in the form of Bolshevism, is what reunited most of Russia in 1921. In 1995 or 1996, extreme nationalism might perform this function. If so, not only anti-Westernism, but also Serb-style "ethnic cleansing" — much admired by Russia's hard right — would probably be on the agenda. □

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